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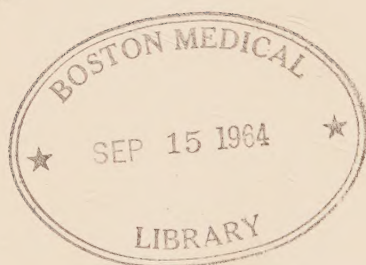
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43<sup>bis</sup>  
WAR LETTERS  
OF AN  
AMERICAN V. A. D.

By  
*Anne Frances Hardon*



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## FOREWORD

Anne Frances Hardon, A. B., Bryn Mawr, 1915, served as auxiliary nurse at the Hospital 43-bis conducted by Dr Ralph Fitch at St Valéry-en-Caux, Normandy, from January 1917 until it closed the following June. She was then at Neuilly. Beginning in August 1917 she served until shortly before Christmas of that year as driver of a camionnette for the French Wounded Emergency Fund, an English war relief association operating in France. In January 1918 she joined the American Red Cross and was sent as a canteen worker to one of their *Cantines des Deux Drapeaux*, operated for the French soldiers at Epernay on the Marne. There she served three months and was then transferred to the American *cantine* at Bourges in the S. O. S. She remained there until during the offensive in the Argonne she was sent on an emergency call to do canteen work in the receiving wards of the evacuation hospital, at that time the nearest to the front, to which wounded men of the "lost battalion" were brought with others. After a month of exacting service there and just before the armistice she was invalided to the rear, and her work thus ended.

The letters from which the extracts in this book are taken were written by her to members of her family during 1917 and 1918.





43 bis

WAR LETTERS OF  
AN AMERICAN V. A. D.





## 43 bis

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### ARRIVAL IN FRANCE

Bordeaux  
December 19, 1916

THIS is our second night in Bordeaux. Doc [Eleanor Dougherty] and I are here with Miss Grylls, the lady who chaperoned us on the boat, and the youth named Martin, who is bound for Italy to demonstrate machinery. We all go to Paris to-morrow morning on the 8:50 train, arriving at 5:50, and we three women are bound direct to the Hotel Prince de Galles, to be together for a few days anyway, until we scatter to our various occupations. All the others have left.

In the station to-day, where we went to register our trunks, we saw the well-known sign: *Taisez-vous, méfiez-vous, les oreilles ennemies vous écoutent.* In the restaurants they have waitresses and small boys in regulation waiter costumes, and possibly one real man-sized

waiter. The streets are full of uniforms and women with crepe veils. Women take the place of men everywhere. They run the street-cars, they are behind the counter in the post offices—everywhere. And yet there seem to be a great many men of military age on the streets, not in uniform. I wonder why?

P. S. These turn out to be Spanish, a great many of whom are at Bordeaux.



Paris  
December 26, 1916

YOU know how I missed you all yesterday. I woke up thinking, "So this is Christmas—Oh, how it has changed!"

Miss Grylls has left us. Her work is distributing clothes to the poor, and it seems inefficient to me. They may give only two garments to a person and one pair of shoes to a family and the people to whom they have given this meagre amount may not come back again in less than six months. And now during the winter season all they have on hand are thin summer garments! And there is eight miles of stuff at Bordeaux standing in the rain awaiting transportation. There seems to be a frightful lack of organization.

There is no gaiety on the streets, no noise and bustle; the cafés and restaurants have developed



into mere eating places, no longer places where one goes with a jolly companion to laugh and have a good time. You may pass a merry jest while there, but you do it silently and in a suppressed way so as not to obtrude your gaiety on the prevailing seriousness about you. The only place where one really sees people bound for a good time is in the theatres. But these merry-makers have a "tomorrow we die" attitude. And when the crowd comes out of the theatre there is no scramble or excitement about getting a taxi to dash off somewhere to finish the evening. It just saunters off into the dark silent streets.

When we landed at Bordeaux I saw Doc through with her passport and permit from the police, as that is such a serious matter. You see, I have my letter from Jusserand attached to my passport so that on opening it you first see the letter. On that account I get all sorts of speed and courtesy and it is reflected on my companion. But on arriving at Bordeaux I had to help out so many people. I found my own baggage. There's no system there but "*cherchez*." All baggage, small and large is dumped down anywhere in the shed, and you have to find it all to have it inspected. But I got through speedily and then had to help the other struggling passengers.

Miss Grylls had a big trunk in the hold for the *Secours* which was to be cleared by Marzloff of Bordeaux, and Stoddard Martin, the machine demonstrator bound for Italy, Spain

and Portugal, having finished his luggage, volunteered to find the firm. His first move was to come to me and ask me. I didn't know so I asked an employee and he said opposite the *gare, tout droit, tout droit* along the *quai*. So, as I was through, I said I'd go, too, as I had an umbrella and it was pouring. Then it occurred to me that there were two *gares* so we went into the first *Postes* and had all the employees and prospective purchasers of stamps hunting in various telephone books and directories without success. So we went back. Miss Grylls was the last obstacle to our departure for a hotel, and she decided to leave her stuff till the next day so we were ready to start. No one had any idea how to get a conveyance. Again with my umbrella, I got a taxi, and, taking my small bag, plunged into the rain. Another thing about arranging to spend other people's money is that you have to know whether they're willing to spend as much as you are bargaining for, and when you're paying it you always get stung for the tip. But I got them all in and their baggage up to the hotel.

When we were coming up from Bordeaux, four of us in a first-class compartment, and at Blois a woman and an officer tried to break in and I said: "*Nous sommes cinq, madame,*" the others immediately sat up and shouted: "No, we're only four." Fortunately, the woman had gone, but I said: "Of course, if you want some strangers and their bags in here, we are only four; otherwise, we're at least five." We salved

our consciences with the thought that the captain had been sitting with us and might return, in which case we should be five.



Paris  
December 28

I HAVE been over to Doc's hospital. I took along my two packs of cards and demonstrated the great American sport, Canfield. Doc had told me that she was particularly charmed by one of her patients, a vivacious little sergeant from Paris, so I resolved to pay more attention to the others and consequently began at the other end of the beds. There sitting up was a great black-haired, black-bearded man who made me think of a shaggy Newfoundland dog and we call him "Newfoundland" since. Before the war he was a *chauffeur mécanicien* from Rouen to Paris. He's the kind that is so pleased if you talk to him that his eyes just sparkle with pleasure and it overcomes him so that it takes him some time to realize what you say. Beside his bed was sitting a boy on crutches from the invaded district near Lille. He had the sweetest, most sensitive face and Doc says he is her right-hand man, standing on one leg to help her make the beds. After I'd told them the price paid for a pack and demonstrated by a game how easily I could lose \$40.00, I asked "Newfoundland" if he'd like to play, but as he has a hole through his left hand he declined saying: "*C'est gênant*"

*pour tenir les cartes,"* so Régnier, the Lille boy of 22 years, held and dealt the cards while I played and he won. The jests of the others who gathered round, and his repeated: "*J'ai de la chance, moi*", amused and pleased me. Then he wanted to know just how much he had won and afterwards to the nurses he'd say: "*J'ai gagné la grande boule!*" Then I met Doc's sergeant who of all things makes me think of a sparrow taking a bath, he sort of flutters and chirps all the time, but under ordinary conditions I don't doubt he could be very fresh. He amuses himself by sticking quantities of stamps on sheets of paper and it seems his *métier* was selling stamps for collections. I told him Dad had bought me a large stamp album and had collected stamps and his face fell when I said I didn't have it with me. But the most interesting patient is a poor man in a plaster cast who has two huge wounds in his leg and spends sleepless nights in suffering but never lets you know by word, though his face shows his anguish. Doc says she doesn't know whether he likes to be talked to or not, but I've sized him up as longing for attention but too weak and suffering to make any effort to get it. When his supper came, I offered to cut up his meat for him but he refused, saying: "*Non merci, Mademoiselle, vous allez vous salir,*" but I persisted, evidently to his gratification. A grouchy deaf old nurse told me that the next time I should come earlier and I was about to leave but the soldiers all protested and so I stayed through their supper and enjoyed it im-



mensely. They must have enjoyed it, too, because they have asked Doc if I wasn't coming again.

I began this several days ago, and now am closing for the mail. This morning, Thursday, the 28th, I was aroused by some one pounding on my door with a letter saying there was work for me at St Valéry-en-Caux. It will take me about two weeks to get my *carnet d'étranger* and then I am off. I'm so glad because, of the four hospitals where I was signed up, that was the one I wanted the most to be in. I'm visiting Doc's patients this afternoon. Johnson and Rotharmel, two ambulance boys, are dining here tonight, and Johnson is giving us a New Year's party next Monday.



43<sup>bis</sup>







43 bis

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Hôpital Auxiliare 43bis  
St Valéry-en-Caux  
Seine Inférieure  
France  
January 22, 1917

Dear Mother:

IF YOU should meet me on the street you would never recognize me as your little daughter. In the first place, I am all arrayed in virgin white. A white "*blouse*" which is a waist and skirt in one, very full and with a belt. It is a combination of cotton and linen. Also, an apron of the same material, pointed in front so that it buttons onto the second button of my dress and is built like a porter's green apron. From my head flows a white cap with a modest red cross over the left ear. I'm about seven inches taller as a result of chilblains in my feet, and I walk with a limp due to housemaid's knee. But I wouldn't change my state with kings!

I am the slavey on the ground floor, and the first window on the left of the picture is the ground floor service room, where most of my

activities take place, when I am not cleaning in the wards or playing parchesi or dominoes with the men or listening to the phonograph (there is one on each floor), or getting them to sing to me. Really, they are an awfully nice bunch of men. One is a baker by trade, and the other day he was holding onto his stomach when I was taking temperatures, and he said: "*Je le tiens comme ça pour que mon coeur ne tombe pas.*" I discovered another aching patient (the little *chasseur*), and got Dr Donnelly to inspect them both. He pulled aside the luxuriant curling mustache of the baker, and disclosed an upper jaw where there were just two remaining teeth, the rest having rotted away and the roots remaining. Such a sight I have never seen! Dr Donnelly said his trouble was indigestion from swallowing fragments of teeth.

Another man in the same big ward used to be a market-man in Paris. He's the only one who would rather be taken prisoner than shot, and he goes into lengthy elaborations as to how he would ingratiate himself with the Germans and then act as spy. "Chicken" sums him up as very badly brought up, and it's true; but I think he just doesn't know.

I remember one time I was cleaning in the big ward and they were playing an animated card game called *la manie* in which you bid, and a ten-spot is the highest card in the suit—it takes even the ace. No. 1 said that someone was withholding the *manie* (the ten-spot), and No. 2,

(who is a dear little man with a red mustache and blue eyes, and whom I look on as peculiarly my patient, as I had to hold his stump when it was first dressed and we suffered terrible tortures together) said: "*Le cochon, va!*" Then remembering that I was in the room, he turned with humblest apology written all over his face, and said: "*Ah pardon, Mees!*" I smiled and answered in a sugary tone, because I knew with him it was only a slip, but I wanted to get an object lesson home to No. 4, the market-man: "*Si vous étiez un petit enfant, vous savez ce que je ferais?—Non?—Eh bien, je vous laverais la bouche avec du savon.*" He smiled, and No. 4 looked surprised beyond words.

Another time I was washing the tops of the bed-tables, and No. 5, who is also somewhat badly brought up but a great help to me, as, hopping on one foot, he assists, unasked, at bed-making, emptying ashes, etc., was having a heated argument with No. 9. The latter is really the most fascinating of the collection. He has the jolliest, brightest brown eyes, and a turned up mustache, and he wears red trousers and a red neck-band. He's quiet in his actions, but he's always teasing the big boastful *chasseur*, who has the next bed. Well, in this heated discussion, which was not in any way addressed to me, there appeared the words *cochon, sale vache*, etc. I stopped my work and again told the cure given small children when they used bad words. They looked surprised and asked why. I answered

that those were not the words to use before a *demoiselle*. No. 9 immediately answered that "he was on", and that I'd never need to recur to the subject, and I never have.

They're all so polite. They thank me when I bring them egg-nogs, they thank me when I clean their bedtables, they thank me when I make their beds—in fact, whenever I do anything for them. I think the reason for this is that when they do things for me I thank *them*, and I occasionally ask them to help me. For instance, when I'm making the beds alone, it's difficult to turn the mattresses, I say to the big *chasseur*, whom No. 9 is always ragging: "*Monsieur le Chasseur, voulez-vous m'aider à tourner ce matelas?*" The first time I addressed him in this manner, No. 9 turned to him and said: "*Eh, Chasseur, est-ce qu'on t'a jamais adressé de cette façon avant?*" You see, it's usually: "*Hé! Chasseur!*" or "*Nu-méro huit!*" Now, since I've praised his ease and strength in turning mattresses, he does it without my asking, and I thank him every time.

The one exception to this rule of universal thanks is No. 25 in the small ward, a man who wears a night-cap and doesn't realize my existence until I come round to take his temperature when he is smoking his after-dinner pipe. He lisps, and is such a negative personality that he has to be warmed up with hot soup before he will even register on the thermometer. He doesn't lift a finger for me, never clears his bed-table, never says *bon jour* or *bon soir* when the others yell it at me, never thanks me, never





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"Chicken" and His Pal

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Patients at St Valéry

[ See Page 24 ]

does a thing! He's quite well, and will be "evacuated" in the first load.



St Valéry-en-Caux  
February 1, 1917

HERE are some of my pals. In the back row, the big chasseur, who turns the mattresses for me, and the hussar who, hopping on one foot, helps me make the beds. In the front row, de Montfort, *alias* "Chicken," with the figure 7 on his cap, then the bright-eyed red-trousered man who developed appendicitis one day, and beside him stands "Golliwog."

This is a tiny town up on the English Channel, with a canal through the main street and leading out into the Channel. On either side of its mouth are high chalk cliffs like those of Dover, extending as far as the eye can see. Sentinels pace up and down on either side of the mouth and along the beach. The town itself has several ancient houses; the best of them is one built for Henry VIII, of wood and plaster, with a high pointed shingled roof, all overgrown with green moss. The hospital was once the finest hotel and contains one hundred and sixty beds. Twenty-five of them are on the ground floor, where I am with a trained nurse, and a nurse trained under her but not a graduate of a hospital. I expect to be the real thing too if I live long enough, as

the taking of pulse, respiration and temperature has been turned over to me. But my chief job is cleaning.

In the morning when I arrive at eight I start making the beds of the men who can't get up, of whom there are six. Then I collect the ashes from ashtrays, wipe off the bed-tables with a rag, and also the tables in the office and the two shelves where the sink is. Then I make four egg-nogs, distribute them and clean the utensils used. Meanwhile the nurse and her assistants are going around doing the dressings. The first day I watched and held up various amputated legs, and bandaged in their wake, and sterilized instruments and scrubbed rubber mats used, and it seemed to me they were legion.

To-day I got out of that, as one of the men on the second floor died Saturday and the funeral was at ten o'clock and I was sent to it as a delegate from the ground floor. He was a youth of twenty-three who had been hit in the head and could never have been sane. One side was paralyzed and his other hand was injured, also a leg amputated, so it really was best that he should not live. His father, mother and brother—who is also a soldier, wounded and in a Paris hospital—came and shed copious tears constantly. The procession was headed by the other soldiers of this hospital, some walking on two legs and some on three. Then came a long line of boys and girls from the Belgian Refugees' Home, formerly a castle, just across the canal from this hotel, and on the high bluff overlooking the Channel.

After them came the church procession of six little boys in red skirts, capes and caps, with one older boy of about fourteen, wearing a black skirt and white shirt and carrying the crucifix. Behind him came the priest and two men chanting the Latin service. Then the hearse drawn by two powerful percherons and draped in black cloth with huge silver tassels. Beside it walked four pall-bearers. Originally their hats had been high black patent leather ones, but time had scalloped the edges. They wore black school-boy aprons, tied in at the waist, and black trousers with a silver stripe down the left leg. In the hearse, draped in a large French flag, was the coffin with the *croix de guerre*, with palm, and the *médaille militaire* pinned onto the flag. There were three real flower bouquets and two bead wreaths, one of black with purple pansies and the legend "*Des blessés de l'hôpital Hauville à leur camarade*" and the other plain white. Behind the hearse walked the mourning family, then we four aides representing the nurses, and finally a mob of town sympathisers.

We walked about a mile to the church where the services were held. The coffin was brought down the main aisle and put onto the hearse, and the procession reformed and we started for the cemetery. At the grave the mother and brother, who stood just in front of me, were shaken by sobs, but the father remained calm. When the priests had retired, Monsieur Hauville, the owner of the hotel which is now the hospital and which he has generously given for the purpose



which it serves, stepped forward and briefly and well outlined the career of Corporal Jean Balt. The sobs increased, and I must own a furtive tear crept down my cheek. As I looked at the soldiers lined up near the coffin I saw many pairs of wet eyes. When he had finished he sprinkled the coffin with holy water, and the family and the rest of us followed suit. Then we turned away, and near the entrance to the cemetery the family lined up and we all shook hands with them. I held up the procession by stopping to say a few supposedly cheering words to the family, to the poor mother particularly, but she wept even harder. Poor things!

One cheerful thing that nature did was to let the sun pierce the clouds just as the coffin was placed on the ground. It's the first time it's been out since my arrival, but that's not surprising for France in winter.

To show you how cold it is here: I can always see my breath in my room, ordinary breath from my nose. The first day I was here I was sitting in the parlor, where there is a stove and it should be warm, yet the thermometer registered 51° Fahrenheit!

There is a bully lot of nurses here. One aide younger than I, one about my age, Miss McIvar, several anywhere between twenty-five and thirty, and at least eight between thirty and fifty. One of them, Miss Carrigan, was sent over by the Red Cross in the first unit to Serbia, where she had typhus and was ordered home, but she came here instead and has been here since this hospital



opened. Miss Bostwick, the nurse who crossed on the same boat with me, is here, and she and three others have taken a house next-door, where they live.

In this hotel, which is given over to nurses exclusively, I have a tiny room and two delicious meals, not counting coffee and milk, good bread and a large pat of excellent butter in the morning, for seven francs a day. There is no electricity nor steam heat, no hot nor cold running water in my room, but I can get all the hot water I want by going to the kitchen, and the maid puts a hot-water bag in my bed every night. My room is kept clean, but I have to make the bed, and it often doesn't get done till evening, as I arise at seven, dress like a lamp-lighter in the cold darkness, for the imitation sun isn't up at that hour, have breakfast and get to the hospital at eight. I have an hour for lunch, and usually two hours off sometime in the course of the afternoon. If you come over to the first supper at six, you must return to the hospital from seven to eight. If you get the second supper, that means you're through for the day.

To get here I left Paris at 5:15 P. M., as that train makes good connection at Motteville. However, we were an hour and a half late, and the train did not get here until 11:30. I got a bus and came right to the hospital. Just before Rouen I looked out and saw a sentry in his box beside the track, and soon after I saw another. The embankment along the track was littered with empty cans, as of condensed milk or to-

matoes, and soon I saw the débris of a freight car, a door marked "meat" and another "insured." I am told that this is the main line of English supply trains. This branch road always waits for the Paris train no matter how late it is.



St Valéry-en-Caux  
February 7, 1917

I'M enclosing various things that I think may amuse you. One is my week's bill. Another is a prospectus of the hospital, another a picture of me cleaning the shelves in the big ward. The striped article in the immediate left foreground is one of the bags that hang at the foot of the beds and that contain most of a soldier's possessions, his changes of clothing. Also, two pictures of St Valéry. A guard patrols the beach down there day and night, and won't allow pictures to be taken of the mouth of the canal. The other picture is the public square. Beyond the town hall, the booth effect is the market, and then the small church, the clock of which is ten minutes behind that of the hospital and ten minutes ahead of the railroad. Incidentally, there are only two trains out of here daily, one leaving at 7:30 A. M., and the other leaving at a comfortable hour in the afternoon and reaching Paris at dead of night.

Then there are two pictures of one of my blessés, Allain de Monfort, of good family, an

amusing lad of nineteen who volunteered at the beginning of the war and entered the cavalry. He is familiarly known as "Chicken." His chateau is near Bourges. His particular pal, met on the hospital train coming here from Amiens, is a Paris boy named Raymond Mengus of the infantry. At the time of the outbreak of hostilities Raymond was at Stuttgart as interpreter for a factory. He speaks English and German fluently, and when in London stayed at the Savoy. There he was working for the Bon Marché. "Chicken" has to ride something, so he rides his pal. They are too funny together, as they both have stiff left knees. "Chicken" is always doing something amusing. He has a very long neck, and every now and then with a circular motion he stretches it to its full capacity, saying: "*Je tiens de la cigogne.*" The other day when I was changing the sheets and pillow cases, he pulled a clean pillow-case off his pillow, and put it tight over his head, with the red cross in the middle of his forehead. Then he draped a sheet around himself, with a point coming up on his chest like our aprons, and when he had it all pinned in place he went around through the wards saying: "*Bon jour, mes enfants!*" He went about to the various patients, and bending over them in a professional way and rubbing his hands together, asked for their symptoms and invariably ordered a purge. His favorite expression is: "How do you do?", which he calls *la grammaire française traduite en anglais par de Monfort*. The other picture is also of him and

his pal Raymond. You can't miss "Chicken" with his sunshade and his colored handkerchief, and Raymond is standing in the back. The others are patients on other floors.

I hate to part with some of them who are well enough to leave. Though many will be sent home, owing to loss of power in legs, arms or shoulders, many will have to go back to the front. Among these are the man who lisps, the big *chasseur*, the market man, No. 5, who is also *mal élevé* but most helpful, the little *chasseur* in the middle ward who runs such erratic temperatures that the other day when I was alone on the floor he almost scared me to death when he registered 100°, though apparently all right. He was playing parchesi with a fine big boy, No. 16, who is amputated above the elbow of the right arm, most helpful and polite, and who comes to me when he wants something special. Then there is No. 17, who comes from the neighborhood of Bordeaux and to whom "Chicken" told me to say that the bridge there "*a quatr-r-re cent quatr-r-re-vingt-quato-r-r-rze mètr-r-res de longuer.*" Also, and this really breaks my heart, the barking sergeant will have to go back. I call him the barking sergeant, not knowing his name nor number, but only that he is on the second floor. He comes down frequently to see the baker, and he barks exactly like a dog. He's decorated with the *croix de guerre* with two stars, is tall for a Frenchman, well built, has nice clean white teeth—which is very rare here—wears his *képi* over his left ear with a curl like

an ocean wave up over the other side of the *képi*, plays the mandolin and xylophone, sings, and is always most polite and has a very pleasant smile.

To-day when I was leaving the hospital I was greeted with a regular bombardment of snowballs from "Chicken," Raymond, the little *chasseur*, a youth from upstairs known as "*Moustache*," because his face is as smooth as mine, and some others. I had on my big fur coat, my cap drawn down over my ears and my heavy gloves, so I didn't mind and even returned the fire. Soon I saw my attackers quailing from some well-aimed shots and heard the barking sergeant saying; "*Attendez, Mees! Je vais vous défendre!*" Then Dr Donnelly, who had been standing in the hall saying: "I'd like to go out and throw snowballs with them, too, if it wasn't for the dignity of the thing," came out on my side, and soon the enemy called a halt. Dr Donnelly suggested we play *Turkey Down*. One stands with his back to the crowd about fifteen feet away, with his head lowered so as to be out of range, and the others fire at him. If he can guess who hits him, that person has to take his place. Poor "*Moustache*" was always hitting and getting caught; but the sergeant, who registered as many hits, was always cute enough to be down gathering snow when the person who was "it" turned round to find the shooter. "*Moustache*," who was in his pajama suit, must have been cold when the game was finished.

One thing that amuses me is that these men

express everything by negatives. In the morning the greeting after the *Bon jour* is *Pas chaud, Mees*. Then comes a daily question as to whether I have slept with the window open, because when I first used to put them to bed and open the window they swore they'd catch cold, and I told them I had never slept with the window shut, yet had survived. They never have *mal dormi*, it's always *pas bien dormi*. Then the massage for legs that have lost power is always *pas bon*. Rarely you hear a *beaucoup froid*, and never a *bien froid*.



St Valéry-en-Caux  
February 15, 1917

THIS week I've just time for some post cards, and in each one the x is over the hospital so that you can get the lie of the land. The first is the front view from the inner basin where they keep the water high by closing the gates. Once in the excessive cold they let it out and the flats froze and the seagulls skidded, broke a leg, and one or two of them were caught. It's not an unusual thing to see a small boy walking along the street leading a protesting seagull by an extended wing, or else driving ahead of him a seagull with clipped wings.

The next is practically the reverse of the first card, taken from the outer basin. It shows the





Hôtel Hauville and Entrance to the Basin  
at St Valéry-en-Caux  
(*View from the Basin*)



Hôtel Hauville and Entrance to the Basin  
at St Valéry-en-Caux  
(*View from the Outer Harbor*)

[ See Page 26 ]



Outer Harbor at St Valéry-en-Caux



Cliffs at St Valéry-en-Caux

[ See Pages 26-27 ]

water gates open and the water rushing out. I am told that this side of the hospital dates back to Francis I. I needn't tell you that this waterway is the canal built out to the Channel and runs through the main street from our hotel to the hospital.

I am about to get some really practical nursing, as the hands of the nurse under whom I work are so swollen with chilblains that she is to have them caked in wax for a few days, and I have been chosen to act as "hands" for her during my working hours. I wasn't chosen just because I could best be spared but because Miss Clay likes me, and has said I am an "industrious" worker and "shape well." Also, I suppose she thinks it may be of use to me in case more wounded come in and I am needed to help more personally with the wounded.

The attitude of the men toward me amuses me. The head-nurse has to enforce regulations, but the men and I have fixed it up so that they can keep their comforters during the day-time provided I can get them under the blankets before she appears. One of the rules provides that they mustn't play cards for money, so I give her the tip not to come in while it's going on, and warn them to get the signs out of the way before she arrives. In short, the men and I have formed a mutual-welfare league, they helping me clean and make beds, in return for which I am supposed to protect them from Miss Clay; but I tell her all that goes on, and they tell me more than they do her. For instance, to-day one

of my particular pets was allowed out for the first time but told not to leave the front of the hotel. I didn't know this until two of his pals had dashed off to a café, pushing him in a wheel chair and had come back to tell me that they had just escaped being seen by Miss Clay. I didn't get mad nor rant at any disobedience because that's not my job, but I told them that orders are orders and that if they didn't want to be caught they shouldn't do what they'd been told not to do. Personally, I saw no harm in it, and Miss Clay didn't, either, but she'd have had to remonstrate. I find them all most polite and helpful and they say such screaming things to and about each other, but never get angry, even at cards. They're wonderfully good-natured.



St Valéry-en-Caux  
February 16, 1917

WE ARE losing two men to-morrow, the two in the back row of the picture, and are also having an operation on an old patient. He has just returned from Veules-les-Roses, a convalescent home with fifty-nine beds, attached to and fed by this hospital. It's eleven kilometers away on the Channel in the direction of Dieppe.

The little man (he's really not small, but so thin and gentle and quiet, and he says the most amusing things and always gets a rise out of his

neighbor, the big *chasseur*, who's leaving to-morrow) has just had his appendix removed. When I made over his bed and rubbed him with alcohol tonight, and said I hoped he'd sleep well again tonight, he answered, shutting his eyes: "*Oh, oui, comme un ange.*" Then opening them with a sudden thought, he added: "*Faut pas être trop fatigué pour se promener avec Mademoiselle dans les sapins.*" I had told him a while before, when he wanted to get up the day after his operation, that I'd take him to walk in the wonderful pine woods on the hill. I suggested it might be too tiring, and he countered: "*Nous prendrons une voiture de place,*" knowing perfectly well that there aren't any carriages here. Then in the next breath he beams all over with pleasure at the sight of the small doll Miss Nelson, the head nurse, is going to send to his little girl.

Really, it amuses me the way these men joke about their loss of legs and arms. No. 3, a jolly man of thirty-five, known as *Crapaud*, *Grand-père* and *Vieux Jeton*, amputated in both legs, one above and one below the knee, asked me to-night when I was giving out the clean clothes if I had forgotten his socks. And the other day the ex-market man was helping me make the bed of a boy of twenty, one leg in a plaster cast broken at the shin, and the other amputated at the ankle. His bed sags in the middle, and he's so thin you can't see there's any leg or body in the bed. The market man said: "*Où qu'elles sont les jambes?*" And when they were finally dis-

covered and the bandaged stump revealed shorter than the other one, he added: "*Ah, ça pousse!*" The boy grinned and looked on with interest, and answered: "*Oui, ça pousse, et bientôt ça sera aussi long que l'autre.*" The only one I've seen show any sensitiveness about his amputation is fine big No. 16, who was hit by a shell at the elbow. When I asked him to write in my book, he said he didn't want to because he couldn't write well enough with his left hand, and added that he hadn't *had* to write with it for so very long.

You know we are on the main road from Havre to Dieppe, and Havre is the centre of the British supplies and Dieppe is nearer the fighting zone. Hence, English transports go through here constantly. To-day a huge motor truck went by with a brand-new aeroplane, bound for the front. A few days ago one went towards Havre laden with soldiers singing at the top of their lungs. And frequently a figure muffled in brown stops in and asks for a pail for water or some gasoline and stopping to warm at the stove reveals itself as one of two English despatch-bearers on motor-cycles. They always travel in pairs.



St Valéry-en-Caux  
February 21, 1917

THERE has been some excitement since I last wrote. The market-man, having received some



money from home, went out one evening after I had taken his temperature, and came back just at eight, the bed-time of the *blessés*, full of booze. It didn't show at first, for he went to his bed, demanded his lentils, lay down for two hours, and then arose like a cyclone. He usually walks with two canes, but this time jumped around the ward without any help. He tore up his own bed and those of his two crippled neighbors. In that ward there are three men with amputated legs, so they couldn't get out of bed, and he flew for them. Another is still weak from appendicitis and from having his bullet removed. The other two are powerful, but one has asthma and the other only half an arm. However, these two sprang to capture Duperche, and he bit the one-armed man. By this time the commotion had brought the two night nurses, Dr Donnelly and the three orderlies, and between them, after he had almost strangled the Doctor, they got him to bed and gave him an injection of morphine. The next morning he was sent to solitary confinement on the second floor, where to the *Défence d'Entrée* sign he has added: "*homme terrible, dangereuse victime du vin rouge.*"



St Valéry-en-Caux  
February 28, 1917

A TRAINED nurse, no matter where she is working, wears the uniform of the hospital where she

trained, and we greenhorns wear whatever we will, if washable. For instance, I bought the uniform of the *Femmes de France*, which is almost a nightgown, and also the aprons and coifs, which I got at the Galerie Lafayette. Miss O'Brien had six months in a military hospital in England, and wears the uniform, which is also white. Miss Gray, having trained in a different hospital, wears gray, with a huge red cross on the front of her apron. So you see there is no special uniform for this hospital.

Two days ago we had an announcement of ninety wounded due to arrive. They have, however, not been further heard of, and we now think this was just a feeler to discover how many wounded the hospitals in this neighborhood could accommodate in the event of an attack. This was told us at five o'clock. Immediately all the wounded men who were able to walk were moved to the top floor, and Miss Clay came right back on duty—she had had two weeks' vacation due to swollen hands. The next morning we found the seven men remaining on the ground floor still holding down that floor alone. Despite the reduced number of patients on the ground floor there is more work, because all the able-bodied have gone upstairs.

I wonder if I wrote you of the advent of the wife of one of my particular pals, Gaillard? He's the baker who gave me the discourse on the general uselessness of the female sex. It seems that two days before Madame was expected the man in the office came into the ward and an-

nounced to Gaillard that a lady wanted to see him. Gaillard comes from Bordeaux, rolls his "r's" and has an excitable disposition, so for a moment the room was full of *Bor-r-r-deaux de Dieu!* which is a synonym of *Pinar-r-rd de Dieu!* the expression he uses on all occasions. Madame was ushered in, and the loving greeting from the wounded husband was: "*Bonjour, Madame!*" Then he had himself shaved, while she sat on the bed and looked on, and when permission had been received he started out to lunch with her. I told him he could stay until 6:30 but he assured me he'd be back long before, and sure enough, when I arrived for temperatures at 4:30, there he was. He got permission to spend the night with his wife, and has done so each night since. They have just gone by, he on crutches, and she with her head swathed in a brown knitted muffler and accompanied by the daughter of the restaurant owner. It amuses me, for each time I've seen them this kind maiden has been along.



St Valéry-en-Caux  
March 2, 1917

SINCE I last wrote the convoy of wounded has arrived. We were notified the night before that there were to be one hundred *petits blessés*, to be divided between the *hospice*, which accommo-

dates in all seventy-five sick, not wounded, and our hospital, and we got in all thirty-one. There were only ten stretcher cases, of which we got two on the ground floor. I was given the morning off, Miss Clay, my particular boss, with whom I get along so well, saying that she would send for me if I were needed. At 11:30 I was just going down to lunch when the maid announced that a soldier was looking for me to go to the hospital because the wounded were arriving. I hastened over and found a crowd gathered outside, but no signs of wounded arriving. Inside, however, I found eight new occupants of the big room. As it holds fifteen in all, and the seven remaining original ground-floor occupants had been moved in there while the room that four of them occupy was being white-washed, the place was full. The original seven were amusing in their different methods of manifesting their longer residence, loudly "ragging" each other, doing picture puzzles, ignoring the new arrivals, and noisily acclaiming me with: "*Mees! Mees! Beaucoup dormi?*" They speak a sort of pidgin French to the other nurses, embodying merely the essentials in superlative form, such as, "*Beaucoup mal, aou!*" or "*Pas chaud, brrr!*" or "*Pas bonne!*" to the masseuse, as a sign that they dislike the torture she puts them through. Occasionally they forget and use the same talk to me, although they're really lucky on the ground floor in that Miss Clay, or I, is always on duty, and she speaks and understands French easily.

The temperature taking was funny, as some of the men evidently had never had it done before and found much difficulty in getting the thermometer under their tongues. One man was apparently using his as a toothpick. The older inhabitants were just as raw at the beginning, yet they jeered and laughed at this man.

No. 1 looked the lowest, and he turned out to have the most wounds, though all small, the largest possibly an inch and a half square. He is in a plaster cast from toe to groin with holes cut in it to dress his wounds. He's a fair man with prominent blue eyes, and during the dressing lay without a murmur or catching of the breath, looking at the ceiling. When the dressings were all done and Miss Watts and I were scrubbing him, he asked me to be careful of his left wrist. He said when they operated on him at the hospital they had tied his hands to the table and he had fought and the cord had hurt his wrist. It was black and blue, and slightly swollen, yet the operation was over a month ago! Also, he was so caked with dirt—not mud, just plain dirt—that we had to scrub him hard all over with a coarse wash-rag. He was much worse than the others, who had come within four days from the trenches, yet he was supposedly having hospital care!

No. 5 is a boy of twenty, class of 1916, who I thought was a "coon," he was so dark. He came out of the bath at least five shades lighter. Almost every time I look at him he says: "*Merci, Ma'moiselle!*"

Incidentally, I have many names at the hospital. Léon and Le Gorre call me *Ma'moiselle Mees* (I'm giving you *mademoiselle* as they pronounce it). Then the boy in their room—the boy we call The Little Boy and of whose amputated leg the ex-market man remarked: "*Ça pousse!*"—calls me *Miss Ma'moiselle*. Le Gorre now calls me *Ma'moiselle Vingt-trois*, because when he came to the hotel they didn't know Miss Hardon, but they did know *la demoiselle du vingt-trois*, twenty-three being my room number. Gaillard, the baker, whose favorite expression is *Pinar-r-rd de Dieu!* calls me Miss Aden—accent on the last syllable. Depardon, *alias* No. 16, *alias l'artilleur*, the fine big boy of twenty with the amputated right arm, calls me *Ma'moiselle*; and my little calico merchant, who is always playing tricks on me, untying my apron strings and tying them to the foot of the bed, with much gusto calls me *Mees, Mees!* I sent you a picture of him in a group, but to appreciate his charms you should see his bright eyes, pitch black, his perky turned up mustache, and his bright red trousers.

It's surprising how clean some of these men keep themselves. For instance the "*Sous-Of.*," whom "Chicken" and Gaillard and the *artilleur* used to tease so unmercifully and whom Mrs Cullis, a Boston woman who does the massage, calls in derision *Le Général*—and he takes it seriously. He's a loathsome creature, frightfully polite. He's constantly brushing his clothes and sewing in a collar, and shining his shoes, and



curling his mustache with a hairpin heated over a match. He has a small heel wound. To-day he expected to get up, and when the afternoon came and I found him still in bed, I asked if he wasn't going to get up. He said: No, he'd have plenty of time to get up later. He'd been in the trenches three months, "*avec de la boue jusqu'au ventre*," and he was glad of the chance to stay in bed.

I lost one of my three special pets to-day. It's the little *chasseur*, *alias* No. 9, named Gaillard. He, Gaillard, *l'artilleur* and I were great pals and took walks together. However, he's gone only to Veules, the convalescent home five miles from here, and he has promised to come over and see us next week. But what makes me really sad is that *l'artilleur* is to leave for "reform," or discharge from the army, at the end of the week. He's too funny! He and Gaillard have been moved onto the top floor, but whenever they want anything they come to me. Gaillard said he'd always be *mon enfant*, and asked me again to be his *marraine*. This makes the fourth time. The other times I've said I had six god-children already, and he has answered that he'd advertise: "*Soldat Gaillard demande Miss Aden comme marraine*," in hopes I'd see the advertisement.



St Valéry-en-Caux  
March 25, 1917

ISN'T it glorious what the English and French troops are doing! All day long there is one of

the patients at the town-hall and as soon as a *communiqué* comes they post it, and he comes hurrying back to the hospital crying: "*Nous sommes à sept kilomètres de St. Quentin! Nous avons pris le canal! Les Boches sont en déroute!*" etc. Then there's a big cheer, and they sing the "Marseillaise." Of course they have countless parodies on this song, but the only one I remember is for the last few lines beginning *Marchons, marchons, qu'un sang impur*, etc. It runs:

Hachez, hachez tous ces sales boches  
Pour en faire du buda.

*Buda* is a black sausage-shaped food which is made of pig's blood and is very good, and the soldiers get a lot of it.

You know my one cause for doubt when I came into hospital work was the fear that I could not stand the sight of wounds. Now I've discovered it isn't the wound that counts, it's the way the man acts. To-day, for instance, "Button Eye," otherwise Charles Chevalier, looked on with interest while Dr Fitch cut open his old wound and probed it, and when he was hurt, after ejaculating *Aie!* he would laugh. That way of taking pain arouses much more sympathy than that of the man just across the way from him, who shrieks before he's touched. But, then, he has suffered a lot and has lost his nerve. He must have had some once, as he's decorated with the *croix de guerre*. However, he scorns it and says he doesn't deserve it.

There is a thick pine forest on private property on the cliffs on the other side of the canal from the hospital, and as I got in well with the *garde-champêtre*, by a little judicious application of the clinging-vine stuff, he gave me permission to go there until the owners, of the publishing house of Leclerc, come for Easter. So *l'artilleur*, Gaillard and I (the little *chasseur* has been transferred to Veules) went up there this afternoon. Gaillard had once told me at great length of the utter worthlessness of the female sex, and as he is chiefly amusing when he's arguing, I got him onto the subject again. In a whisper and enumerating on his fingers, he gave me the eight principal reasons: "*Premièrement, malheur en ménage; deuxièmement, corde au cou; troisièmement, ça ne paie pas l'eau que ça boit; quatrièmement, ça mange ce que son mari gagne; cinquièmement, (much expressive gesture of putting on powder) rouge and décolleté; sixièmement, malade trois-quarts du temps; septièmement, ça se tient debout seulement parce que c'est la mode; huitièmement, famille de malheurs; et conclusion, le sexe féminin n'est rien, rien, rien! Naturellement, il y a des exceptions, mais tellement peu que ça ne compte pas.*"



St Valéry-en-Caux  
March 30, 1917

IF Robinson Crusoe and his man Friday had been washed ashore at St Valéry two days ago,

saying: "The Lord will provide," they'd have thought he did so quickly and literally. The town and some dozen of our patients impersonating Crusoe, thought so too, but the government and hospital authorities and about six of those same patients aren't so sure about it and think perhaps there's more truth in the saying that "Satan finds work for idle hands."

Yesterday barrels of rum were washed ashore along the coast from Dieppe to Fécamp. The first we knew of this was after supper last night when one of the nurses on duty came into the parlor and asked Dr Hoyle if he would go over to the hospital, as some of the soldiers were drunk. He left and we heard no more. However, in the morning I noticed that one of the ground floor men who had come in the last convoy, had slept in his bed but had apparently disappeared, leaving his clothes in his bed-sack. He was the small boy with an almost cured head-wound, and hands that were coming on well after being badly mangled by a shell. It seems that several barrels of rum had been washed up on the shore, perhaps from the transport that was sunk in the Channel about a week ago, and the pebble-pickers had found them and dashed off for bottles which they filled, followed by the eager towns-people with more bottles. As this town is a small seaport in France its morals "go some," consequently the soldiers easily secured some bottles for a small consideration and brought them back to the hospital to share with their friends. Miss Wiggin found one man on

the first-floor on his hands and knees crawling under the bed, and investigation to-day reveals a bottle of rum between the legs of the bed and the wall. History will never repeat what our small boy did or said, but I imagine it must have been pretty strong, as he is to be shipped on immediately to a military hospital. Just at present he is on the third floor in "solitary." Also, various other floors were affected in one or more spots, and they say that one of my pets—a pet merely because he has so many wounds and suffers so—was in a drunken stupor with glazed eyes. Through Dr Fitch's leniency he will not be moved on, as his compound fracture would suffer thereby. To-day guilty and innocent alike are on forty-eight hours arrest, and all the bedsacks and tables are being ransacked. So far our floor has revealed only one *bidon* (canteen) with rum, and that is the property of a silent, smileless individual. However, in spite of the forty-eight hours arrest, certain of the men can get special permission from M. Hauville to go out, and I was much pleased when I was out just now to run into my *artilleur* also out. It shows *père* Hauville trusts him.

The head of the boys' school here told Miss Clay that seven of his young charges had had to be carried home, having become intoxicated, not only with the permission but even with the encouragement, of their parents. It's a great town! But the thing that pleases me is that, considering that there was so much rum to be had for nothing, so few of the men got drunk,

and none of my pals were among the number. *L'artilleur* told me that when Violet came into his and Gaillard's room with a can of it, Gaillard turned on him with: "*Sors vite, ou je te fiche un coup de béquilles!*" In the same connection he said: "*Si quelqu'un entre voir Gaillard le matin avant qu'il a eu son moka, il est aussi bien reçu qu'un chien dans un jeu de quilles.*" They are picturesque and graphic in their phrases.

An interesting item we learned in the papers is that the British censor authorizes the statement that since the beginning of the war the English have captured four hundred submarines, one hundred and eighty-seven of which are at present lying chained together in Plymouth harbor. These are all in good condition, practically new. Of course, you have also seen that the *Bremen* on her maiden voyage landed in Dover, and that the *Deutschland* turned up in Halifax. On this boat, they say, there was a large sum in gold, destined for Mexico, to strengthen her in her conflict with the U. S. A. The important part of this is not the number of submarines but the fact that Germany has lost so many trained officers and men, because it takes time and courage to man a submarine.



St Valéry-en-Caux  
April 2, 1917

I'M sending you a picture that Gaillard took of me in the wood the day he told me the various



reasons for the worthlessness of the female sex, also a picture of him and *l'artilleur* on the same occasion.

These men are amusing in the discussions they have. I remember one cause for lengthy argument between Gaillard and *l'artilleur* was whether the street in front of the hospital ran up or down, and once they almost came to blows about the number of birds on the wall-paper in their room. But to-day the argument was between Charlot (Charles Chevalier, who had appendicitis, and then his bullet extracted, and now turns out to have a hole through his ilium) and Albert Muller, who had six wounds, buttock, stomach, and thigh and compound fracture of the tibia. Muller had to-day been extracted from his cast and put into a gutter-splint. The French have a careless way of putting the plaster right onto the flesh without an inside wrapping of cotton, so the hair grows into the plaster, and it hurts terribly when the plaster is pulled off. Muller has lost his nerve anyway and bellows at the least thing. He's the man who offered me his *croix de guerre*, as I wrote you. While I was making beds for the night Muller was half sitting up watching his toes wriggle through the covers. Of course he was awfully pleased that he could do it, though he should not have done it, for the ends of the bones aren't even opposite each other. And as he wriggled them he said: "*Quand je bouge mon pied ça——*", and Charlot broke in with: "*B'en ça remut, quoi?*" And Muller: "*Comment? T'as*

*trouvé ça tout seul, que quand je bouge mon pied ça remut?" "Non,"* answers Charles burrowing down under his own bed clothes like a bashful kid, *"c'est le copain-là qui me l'a soufflé"*. And then they had it back and forth, all five in the room joining in, as to whether when it *bouged* it also *remued* or whether it did first one and then the other, and if so which it did first. Needless to say, they came to no conclusion, but each seemed satisfied that his contribution had settled the argument in his favor.

The oldest inhabitant of the room is Charles, who was here and walking round on crutches when I arrived. In the next convoy of March 1st came Muller and No. 6, who had two wounds 6 inches long and one of these an inch deep in places, on the inside and outside of his right thigh. He's a fine fellow and just beginning to join in ragging me, in which Muller and Charles indulge continually. He has fine hazel eyes, set far apart and a skin as soft as a baby's. He's the man whose wounds Dr Fitch cut and then sewed the skin across, doing it under cocaine in the ward, and the man never uttered a groan nor flinched, though he covered his eyes with his hands so as not to see what was taking place, and when it was over had so perspired that even his sheets and pillows were soaked. Also, he's the only man who hadn't had any rum the other night, but he said it was because he felt too badly after being sewed together. That may

or may not have been the reason; anyway, he didn't touch the rum.

Opposite him in bed No. 9 is old Esau. His real name is Boulogne, but Esau was a hairy man, hence the nickname. He certainly has been a trump. He's forty-three, and one cold night when the ground was frozen he was leaving the factory where he works making gunpowder when a comrade gave him a playful push and he fell sixty centimeters and was picked up with a broken tibia. He's the man who was so grateful when I made his bed one night and brushed out the crumbs. It was then that he told me that in Beauvais, the last hospital where he was, they made his bed just once in the three weeks he was there. When he was coming out of ether he rolled his head from side to side, saying nothing more profane than "*Oh, là-là-là-là!*" Somehow that seems to give great solace to a Frenchman, as Gaston said it constantly, adding on more *là-là's* as the pain grew more intense. And Esau has never murmured since. Every time we'd ask how the leg was, the answer was always: "*Oh, ça va!*" or: "*Pas trop pénible!*" And he never fusses for a back-rest or anything else, always has a pleasant smile, showing nice white teeth. Teeth among these people are as rare as among hens. Charles has a full upper row, but they are yellow as my silk plumet. He and Muller frequently say to me: "*Mees, pourquoi montrez-vous vos dents comme ça? Elles me font jaloux.*"

St Valéry-en-Caux  
April 11, 1917

WE have had a horrid spring, and heaven knows when it will end. Just now huge flakes of wet snow are falling and the thermometer is low enough to make half-cured chilblains sit up and take notice. As we were all visited by them we all join in cursing the change of moon which renewed this cold spell. We have all kinds of weather every twenty-four hours, usually beginning with snow, rain, wind, and ending with glorious sunshine and a clear starry night.

We're all so pleased about America's coming into the war. The first thing we did when we read the news was to hang the American flag on the front of the hospital, along with the other Allied emblems. Madame Montreux, who keeps the hotel where we live and gives us delicious food, said that now she didn't mind the cold so much. It's the thought of the unlimited, untapped American resources that gives her courage. You know, there's almost no coal here now, and our stoves in the hall and parlor are fed with wood, though over at the hospital we still have coal. I'm comfortable now in my room, for they've dug up an unused oil-stove, which gives me great joy, though it uses up the oxygen and my lamp doesn't burn as well.

We've had a party since I last wrote, to celebrate America's entrance into the war! Dr Fitch treated all the men to champagne and also

gave us a champagne supper. M. and Mme Hauville, who own the hospital, and their family friend and general factotum, Mme Godichard, who acts as maid and companion to Madame and can usually be found doing up a package of food for a Russian prisoner in Germany, also attended. The supper was lots of fun, many of us being in fancy dress. Mrs Coulthard, an Englishwoman on the operating staff, was draped in the Royal Ensign, which no private person is supposed to have in his possession. Miss O'Brien, an Irish girl, was a charming Irish peasant, with a red handkerchief tied around her head, white waist, green fichu and over-skirt, red handkerchief for an apron, and many red handkerchiefs sewed together for a petticoat. Miss Hale, a Canadian and a "corker," too, was a Scotch soldier, having borrowed the top of a uniform from one of the wounded lieutenants and affixed to it the Canadian oak-leaf on one lapel and a hand-grenade on the other, a *képi* over one ear, a short brown skirt as a kilt, showing bare knees and a feather duster for the feather contrivance worn just below the waist and which is called, I believe, sporran. I was Wales, with a black stove-pipe hat manufactured for the occasion, with a white ruching inside, a white waist, black velveteen bodice, blue plaid handkerchief as an apron and a green silk petticoat. Miss Mills, draped in a sheet with a large silk American flag wound around her, and a similar one in a point on her head, did finely as Columbia.

The big flag she wore was in the hospital at Antwerp at the time the Germans took the town and was torn down by one of the nurses just before the Germans arrived. It is now in the possession of Dr Hoyle, an Englishman by birth and an American by naturalization, who was in that hospital and is now the second doctor here, doing such unpleasant work as cutting off plaster casts and pulling teeth—and there are lots to pull.

To return to the party. Miss McIvar appeared in a most becoming Japanese kimono, with jonquils in her hair. Miss Shaw was Italy, with more red handkerchiefs as cap and apron, a black bodice and green silk petticoat. Incidentally, all these gaudy handkerchiefs are those supplied by the hospital for the use of the soldiers, and there are handkerchiefs of every shade and every hue. Miss Upton and Miss Clark made glorious Indians, with feather dusters in their hair, red plaid steamer rugs draped over their shoulders, and khaki underneath, with red stockings and moccasins. Miss Wiggin, in my fur hat and a Russian blouse, was Russia; and last but not least, Miss Holden was a fat black mammy in a blue-and-white-check uniform, well padded with sofa cushions, with two more colored handkerchiefs as a turban, white stockings with black ones underneath to make the illusion complete, and enormous white shoes.

The table was in the shape of a horse-shoe



covered with jonquils, which grow in such profusion in the woods, and tri-colored ribbon, and the walls were covered with the flags of all the Allies. At the places were dinner-cards rhyming with the name of the person who was to sit there. Mine was:

For every fault we'd find a pardon  
 Could we speak French as does Miss —.

and above in the corner of the card was a picture of a girl sitting on a bed with *amputés* and *béquillards* standing around.

At six to-day I went to relieve Miss Clay, so that she could come over to first supper. In the big ward I found a number of the *blessés* making bandages. No. 6 was turning the crank, No. 11 was holding the unrolled end, and Charles, sitting in a comfortable chair smoking a cigarette, and with black thread and a huge needle, which he stuck into himself as often as anywhere else, was tacking the end of the rolled bandages. In this way they had done one hundred and fifty-two bandages in the course of the afternoon, as the weather was too bad for any of them to go out.

Old Esau is always trying to save me work. When I come round for the evening bed-making he straightens and pats his bed-clothes, and smiles up at me and says: "*Pas nécessaire, pas faire mon lit.*" (They all talk this pidgin French, as it is necessary for most of the nurses,

who can barely understand the essential words.) I look at him and smile, and begin taking his bed apart, and with a happy, yet resigned smile, he sinks back onto the mattress, saying: "*Rien à faire, Mees. Toujours travailler.*"

But to return to Charles. He's a gentle soul, though if anyone is having a painful dressing, he sits up in bed, his eyes popping out of his head, to see the faces occasioned by the pain. His most dreadful threat the day No. 6 and No. 11 were allowed to get up and he couldn't, was: "*Il faudra que je me fâche.*"

All patients who don't get up have their backs rubbed with alcohol and powder twice daily. Charles always tries to get out of it, either by not noticing me when I'm standing by his bed ready to do the deed, or by looking up at me with a sprightly smile and bouncing up and down, saying: "*C'est fait, Mees, c'est fait!*" when it hasn't been done at all, as I've had the bottle in my hand every minute. Sometimes it's an appealing, long-drawn-out: "*Mees, pas aujourd'hui, demain!*" Then when I make the gesture for him to turn around so I can get at him, he sighs: "*Rien à faire!*" and burying his head in the bedclothes: "*Méchante Mees!*" always with a cheerful twinkle and looking at me out of the corner of his eye. He's just like a kid, and when he's caught red-handed and assumes an innocent air, he's extremely amusing. Really, I could write volumes on the subject of Charles. All the nurses like him, and he tries the same wiles on them all without any par-

tiality. One shirt a week the wounded get, and it serves as pajama top and day shirt as well. However, I've got used to that. As Charles was up yesterday and would get up again to-day I didn't give him a rub. As I was leaving the room with the bottle in my hand, he said: "*Pas de friction, Mees?*" "*Non! Vous en voulez une?*" I replied, thinking I'd call his bluff. "*Oui, oui, oui!*" So I turned the covers back, and found him impossible to get at, as he had his drawers on and his shirt tucked into them. Moreover, when I came to get him up before luncheon so as to make his bed his socks were also on, so he had only to pull on his bright red trousers, tie a red handkerchief round his neck, put on his coat and shoes and emerge. This makes dressing simple and unembarrassing.

My special favorite, Gaillard, has within the last two weeks become the assistant in the office next to the ground-floor service-room, and when I go in there alone he passes notes to me through the key-hole. It makes me think of Pyramus and Thisbe and the wall.



St Valéry-en-Caux  
April 30, 1917

I SAW by the papers yesterday, "Le Matin" and "Le Journal de Rouen," which is the afternoon paper and which we get the day it's printed instead of a day late, as the "Herald" and the

"Matin," that the House has passed universal conscription and that the Senate would doubtless soon do likewise. I'm glad as I can be, because now victory is assured and at no distant date. The burning question is: Who will be the first to come and when? This is on everybody's tongue.

To-day we have a slight let-up of work. I wrote you that we had had two convoys of severely wounded men in one week, and yesterday we received the strangest order from the Medical Bureau. It was to evacuate all of the last convoy who could not be cured in three weeks and who could stand the trip. It was strange that they wanted only those of the latest convoy, instead of all those in the hospital who could go. In that way they got only forty from us instead of a possible hundred. If there is anything more disagreeable than sending off well men for a week's furlough and then back to the front, it is sending away stretcher cases whose progress you've watched with pleasure and whose unaccountable temperatures you've worried over—sending them away to a military hospital (this time to Rennes), where they have strict rules, little liberty, men nurses and none of the friendly sympathy which is so marked here.

Night of May 2-3, 1917

WE HAD some trouble getting the men off, because only two of the eight from this floor could

walk, the others being all "stretchers", who had to be dressed and their bed-bags packed and their dressings done at the last moment and tied on solidly, as there was no knowing where they would go or how long it would be before they received further attention. Among those leaving was a civilian who had been working in the fields two kilometers back of the firing line, when a piece of shrapnel went in one side of his knee and came out the other. When he arrived it fell to my lot to undress and get him to bed, and as soon as they got him off the stretcher into his bed he began to shake with sobs. I took the muffler from around his neck and suggested that he help me, but I had to stop to give him the glad news that luncheon would come along in a few minutes. How he did get on my nerves before he left and how thankful I was to see the last of him! I have found only one other patient who affected me in this way. Hardly a day went by that we didn't have to change some part of his linen at least once. And every time he'd give us all the opposition he could. When we made his bed and wanted to flatten the sheet under him, he'd purposely try to prevent our turning him or raising him. However, we fixed that by getting the orderly, Daniel, to our rescue. Daniel is a brick, minus four front upper teeth, always with a cheerful willing smile; he remembers his various tasks, works steadily and efficiently, and is unalterably pleasant in spite of the comments on the food he serves and the constant extra steps that some of the older resi-

dents of this floor make him take. The old man was always objecting, no matter what we did to him. He looked at us with suspicion the moment we appeared in the doorway, and if we headed toward his bed he'd begin to enumerate the things he didn't want done, hoping to cover our intentions and deter us. But that never had much effect. Then if we didn't come toward him he'd call to us: "*Sst! Sst! Ma soeur!*" with a gesture of the head for one to appear at his bedside immediately. The first few times I thought it was a confidential disclosure of some sort, but when it proved to be something as private as: "You've taken my handkerchief. You'll have to give me another," I soon ceased to drop all other occupations and fly to him at the beck of his hand.

Madame Hauville came in at this point and told us something of the increase in prices since the war. Among others, potatoes, which were at fifteen francs the hundred kilos, are now eighty-four francs for the same amount. Also, she said that an American, who is a surgeon at the front with the rank of lieutenant and who has just arrived here to-night on leave for one day, said that of forty-three divisions sent to battle in the last Rheims attack only seventeen had come away. The French didn't escape uninjured by any means, but there were such a number of black and Arabian forces left on the field that the president of Guatemala is investigating the why and wherefore. There are two reasons for this state of affairs: first, the Ger-



mans are much more afraid of the blacks than of the French, and hence put up less resistance when fighting them; then, also, the use of blacks saves the white forces.

But to get back to my civilian and the evacuation. The train was to leave at 6 P. M., and by 5:15 we had fed and clad our men and the last had been removed on a stretcher in the ambulance. Needless to say, the ward looked as though a cyclone had struck it. By good fortune I was able to go to the station. The engine had a big red cross on a white ground painted on the front. The train had come from Dieppe, and had picked up many wounded there, and was to be filled up here and sent to Rennes. There were whites, blacks and Arabs. The cars were mostly third-class corridor cars, with a few first-class corridor cars, in which live the attendants. There are two of these to a car of wounded and they wear blue denim coats and trousers with a red cross arm band. Most of them on this occasion had beards. There is also a baggage-car, arranged one-half kitchen and one-half dining-room for the attendants. Also, a *tisanerie*, or operating car, half of it a drug room and the other half divided off and all painted white, the walls, the cupboards, the chairs, the operating table, the floor.

The stretcher cases were arranged in tiers and held in place by long iron chains hanging from the ceiling. I located all of our six stretcher men, and they beamed all over at sight of me. One boy said a very pretty word of thanks. I

urged him to make sure he had left nothing in his bed-bag or table-drawer, and he answered: "*Non, je n'ai rien laissé, excepté beaucoup de chagrin et de regret de vous quitter.*"

Monday there was a slight let-up, and I was greeted with the glad tidings that I should begin my six weeks of night duty Tuesday night. I really feel like a piker because while during the day I used to work very hard physically, now during these two nights I've done nothing but write letters, make my rounds every hour in one direction, and every half-hour in the big ward, as there's a man there who has just been operated on and to-night he has temperature of 102. The active time begins at four o'clock, when the night woman washes the floor in the service-room and the office. At that time we have tea and bread and butter, and at about six I start taking temperatures.

I've just had the scare of my life. I heard a cat miauwing and got up to look for it, when the door of the big ward opened and slammed shut, and I found myself face to face with the big black man known as Blanchette. But Blanchette is a good sort and very amusing. He has been in the service for fourteen years and wears three decorations, large silver medals pinned to his coat. Also, he has a *gri-gri*, which has protected him so far, as this is his first wound. A *gri-gri* is any charm. It may be a goat's horn, or shells, or a leather locket. The main thing that gives it value is that the priest has said a prayer and performed some mystic rite over it.

Blanchette's *gri-gri* is a string of small gray shells which are fastened at one end around the middle finger of his left hand and at the other end around his wrist. He is said to have another *gri-gri* which gives him the power to kill lambs without using a knife or any other weapon. The other black man on this floor has two *gri-gris*, one a leather locket and the other a tiny braid of his own hair which sticks up straight in the air on the top of his head and is just about one inch long. He's an amusing soul, too, and always talks in a whisper. *Y-a-bon* and *Y-a-pas bon* are the two stock Senegalese phrases which cover everything, the first meaning a thing is good and the other that it is not good. If the wound hurts, *y-a-pas bon*. If it gets better, *y-a-bon*. Last night I detected the odor of smoke, and sleuthed around until I found this black man, "Pot-de-cirage," sitting up in bed and smoking. There is a rule forbidding the patients to smoke at night. As it's dark, they might, I suppose, mistake their sheets for ash-trays. When he saw me he grinned broadly, and I said: "*Pas fumer.*" He smiled even more broadly and answered he wouldn't smoke any more after he finished that cigarette.

There used to be still another coon on this floor, whom we called "Pet" and whom the men dubbed "Boule-de-neige." He had been buried on the Somme, and his right side was apparently crushed internally, though there was no wound or external mark. All day long he lay in a stupor, with a temperature of 104 and a respira-

tion of 46, and at night the fun began. If anyone came near him he'd wave his heavy leather belt with the brass buckle, and at other moments, clad in nothing but his shirt and with his long legs showing to advantage, he'd stroll around the floor brandishing a knife. Blanche and Miss MacLean were scared to death, but I was on day-duty at that time and so wasn't deeply affected by the stories they told of his actions. But a recollection of him probably flashed through my mind when in searching for the cat I ran into Blanchette.

To-morrow morning I am going to give three demonstrations in the gentle art of brushing one's teeth. No. 16, our most serious case, who is constantly asking for an opium pill—a request which falls on deaf ears—said in his draggy way: “We haven't any brushes, miss, we left them all in the trenches.” I told this to Miss Clay, and the result is that to the three men were given brushes to-day. No. 19, an amusing fellow, who is always making *polichinelles* out of newspapers or cardboard, says he never used one, and No. 17, who has nice white teeth, says the same. Incidentally that's an interesting case. With a painful and unpleasant wound in his side and an opening half as big as the palm of my hand in both buttocks, this boy never complains, doesn't murmur during the dressing, and is constantly thinking up tricks to play on me.

Charles Chevalier, about whom I wrote you at length a while ago, has been sent to the convalescent hospital at Veules-les-Roses, which is

connected with this one. *L'artilleur*, the big boy amputated above the elbow of the right arm, has left for "reform", and is now at Lyons, waiting to have the measurements taken for his mechanical arm. He plans to learn the trade of gardener. He was a fine gentlemanly boy and I liked him immensely. Although I'm sorry he's gone I haven't time to realize it nor to miss him.



St Valéry-en-Caux  
May 12, 1917

A LETTER that I received this morning that gave me much pleasure was from my prize god-child, Georges Cohendy, who is in the colonial troop (Chasseurs d'Afrique) and is fighting near Monastir. He has been in the first line trenches for seventeen days without a respite.

If you could see the way some of them write, you'd smile. Just to give a sample of what can be done in the way of French spelling, I enclose a card from one of the boys who was evacuated to Brest. The boy who sent the card is one who had the German gas-mask, helmet and pocket-lamp, all of which he said were better than the French ones. In civil life he is a hairdresser, and it was he who sheared the wool from the head of the Arab who sits with his hands clasped as in prayer when we make his bed, saying: "*Oh, là, là, là, mon ami, chouet!*"

I wrote you that in the last convoy we had received three blacks—"Blanchette," "Pet" and "Pot-de-cirage." "Blanchette" was operated on the night he arrived and I watched him out of ether when he flung the hot-water bottle from his bed. He was an extremely good sort, loved teasing and responded to it, was straight as a ram-rod, long-legged and narrow-hipped. On the subject of Wilhelm II he announced: "*Sénégalais tous manger, tous!*" He is the one I met in the hall one night when looking for a yowling cat, parading in his *robe de chambre* and showing much brown leg. "Pet" is the lad who would suddenly and silently appear at night, swinging his leather belt with the heavy buckle, or carrying an open knife and clad only in the shortest of shirts. When the night staff came on they would ask after "the ground floor pet"—hence the name. Later "Pet" got to the place where he would strut about the town pursued by crowds of delighted children, who would stop him every ten steps to shake his hand. There was a phonograph in his room, and one of the songs has for chorus:

J'ai un thermo, un thermo, un petit thermomètre;  
J'ai un thermomètre épatant, qui monte et qui descend.

Well, "Pet" would lie in bed for ten minutes at a time, just talking off into space, without the least expression on his face, and apparently not expecting a reply, as he spoke in Senegalese. He



never paused for breath, and each discourse would end with:

J'ai un therbo, un therbo, un 'ti therbobète.

He had caught the tune, but had no idea of the words, and merely gave his reproduction of the sounds. His countenance never rose to the dignity of a real expression until blank surprise appeared when the men went off into yells of laughter. It was one of the funniest sights I've seen in a long time.

"Pot-de-cirage" is an older coon, I think, though none of them knows his age. He's the one who has as *gri-gri* a stiff little upstanding braid about an inch long which his wife labored over. He asserts that were it cut he would die on the spot. He always talks in whispers and sings the songs the other men teach him in a high, sweet, plaintive voice, repeating the sounds as he hears them with no idea of the meaning of the words. "Au clair de la lune" is one of his favorites, and "Ferme tes jolis yeux, car les heures sont brèves" is another. Every night just as sure as darkness falls I have to put his bandage on again, tucking in his toes. One night I had opened the window and put an extra cover over him so that he would not be cold, but ten minutes later, in an excess of heat, instead of throwing off the cover he took off his shirt and then drew the covers up well around his neck. I looked on with amusement, but took no part.

About three o'clock in the morning I heard a steady pounding on the table in Ward B, and as there is one man in that room who has a badly wounded arm and a gash in his side I went in to reconnoitre. The sick man was sleeping, but "Pot-de-Cirage" was in a bad way, as one of his toes had peeked out through the bandage. He sat up in bed, his huge black trunk standing out distinctly against the white bed-clothes, a dead black except for his shining forehead. His shirt was still off, tucked in under the bed-clothes somewhere. I made him put it on, tucked the sheet in around his back, patted him on the shoulder and left him with: "*Maintenant, dormez!*" and in two minutes he was fast asleep. In the morning when I woke the others for temperatures I asked him how he had slept, and he answered: "*Y-a-bon. Toi bien serrer. Moi dormi.*"

At the field station all wounded are given an anti-tetanus serum, and by the time they reach here it is about at its height of activity. Some of them suffer terribly from it. One poor youth was covered with huge welts, as though from monster cootie bites. The result was that I spent most of the night bathing him in a vinegar and water solution. But he was so patient, never complained, although on coming in I'd hear him scratching as if devoured by a million cooties. When I had finished he would say: "*Merci, Mademoiselle!*" with a wealth of gratitude in his voice.

Two nights ago on arriving at the hospital we

heard that a train was coming in. It had left Beauvais at 1:30 P. M. and was due here about twelve hours later. Then it was announced for 11:22, and I dashed over to the hotel and aroused Miss Nelson. Thirty-nine cases came to the hospital, of which eleven fell to the ground floor. There were nine "legs" and two "arms." Miss McIvar and I helped to get them into bed. Most of them went right to sleep, and I didn't hear a peep until I began waking them at six the next morning for temperatures. But in spite of the early hour and the little sleep they had had, they all greeted me with a smile and a *Bon jour, Mademoiselle*. The longer I stay the more I am impressed by the patience, good nature and gratitude of these butchers, bakers and candlestick-makers. They're a wonderful lot, and again and again when they're despaired of they'll eventually come up and recover in an entirely un-hoped-for way—you can't keep them down. They recover so quickly, too. One youth who yesterday had a temperature of 103, with his shoulders and jaws stiffened from the anti-tetanus serum, is normal to-day and the stiffness all gone.

My special pet in bed No. 17, who was considered in so serious a condition on his arrival that his family was telegraphed for, is now bouncing around in bed, making my life miserable by scratching on the wall, cracking the bones of his hands, and hiding the brush with which I get the breadcrumbs out of the beds at night. He adds "ng's" in his talk, so evidently

he comes from the south. He came with the convoy of men who were wounded in the big attack of April 16, whereas these last men were wounded May 5, stayed forty-eight hours at the front ambulance, forty-eight hours at Beauvais, and from there came here.



St Valéry-en-Caux  
May 20, 1917

JUST a line to tell you that within a month this hospital staff, equipment and some of the patients are moving to Evreux, south of Rouen and within two hours of Paris. Dr Fitch broke the news to us two days ago. I must say I hate to leave this little town in the lovely country and the prospective sea-bathing for a town of twenty thousand inhabitants, particularly in the beginning of summer. It happened this way. Dr Fitch is a bone specialist, but serious bone cases that would need his attention are too dangerous to be sent to St Valéry, so far from the centre of distribution of wounded. Hence, although we have serious enough cases, they are mostly flesh wounds which any surgeon could manage and which aren't grist to Dr Fitch's mill. So the government has thought fit to move him and his nurses nearer the base of wounded, in order that any train passing through the town could drop off a bone case and leave it in the hands of an

expert. The change will mean more work and less play for us, particularly as it is a military hospital. Before the war it was a boys' *lycée*. The present occupants, German prisoners, will be moved out and the whole place cleaned before we get there.

To-night when I came on I was much amused at an *unexpected* wife's turning up and an *expected* wife's failure to appear. The disappointed husband is a regular clown. There isn't a noise or cry that he can't imitate, and the time to catch him is during his morning ablutions. Then he sits up in bed, wash basin balanced on his knees, and gives the cooing of a dove, the grunting of a hog, the discharge of a mitrail-leuse, the song of a mechanical cuckoo, etc. And all the time he's giving his performance he's apparently entirely unconscious that there is the least bit of humor in it.

I got a charming letter from another god-son to-day. I had commented on the good humor and patience and gratitude of the men. He said it wasn't anything to be surprised at, as it was part of the baggage of a *poilu*, a thing which, according to him, "sometimes sleeps but never dies," and often *pour se dérider et pour chasser les idées noires* a little thing causes a *grosse hilarité*. Also, I had spoken of the morning smile with which I am greeted when I go around shaking and prodding these heavy sleepers into consciousness; I said that *I* shouldn't begin by smiling at my tormentor. He answered: "Why shouldn't they smile on arriving at a little para-

dise after the hell they had been through, after months and months of nerves strained for the fatal moment, seeing comrades fall all about them! *Mais c'est le merci discret*"—Isn't that charming—"a discreet thank you"?

This morning—I mean the morning of which this is the night—eleven men left on the 5:07 train. Six of them had been on this floor but were moved to the third when succeeding convoys came. They are now all cured and are going for seven days' furlough before returning to the front. One of them, a great tall boy of twenty, was a great pal of mine, did all the dusting, and whenever I made beds he'd get up and take a hand without being asked. I couldn't help a lump gathering in my throat on thinking of the prospects of these men: seven days of furlough at home with their families—those who have them—and then back to the bursting shells and muddy trenches, particularly unpleasant after their freedom and the care taken of them here. It was an unusually horrid morning, too, in the cold, gray half-light, as the rain was still in the air and the street was thick with puddles. Ralite had no coat, and his long lean legs and short jacket looked cold and gray. He's only a child anyway, but so many of them are children! One of my small boys of whom I've written as the little *chasseur* in bed No. 19, the friend of Gailard and *l'artilleur*, wrote to me that he was back on the front in the neighborhood of Soissons. He said it was a regular desert, and not a drop of wine nor a grain of tobacco to be had. Poor boy,



he's only twenty! In civil life a farm hand and in the army a *chasseur alpin*. The sea air of Veules, where he had been convalescing, had turned his skin to the color of an Arab's, and in his dark blue uniform and dark blue "tam" at a rakish angle he was a picture. Gaillard, the last of the trio is still here on the third floor, but as the wound in his leg seemed resolved not to close, it was sewed up yesterday. I went to see him in the evening and found him as amusing as ever. That's only the second time I've seen him in over two weeks that I've been on night duty. Well, "Other times, other customs"—and I might add: "New pals."

There's a delightful electrician now in the Sixth Mixed Colonial, in bed No. 19, named Etienne Bastide. We've had much trouble about the cat getting in the window in the ward where he is, and one night he said if he'd only known I wanted the cat caught he'd have devoted his attention to the matter. He only needed, he said, a stone about the size of his fist, and two cents worth of spiced tobacco. If he had it he'd put the stone *there* (lifting up his water-cup and putting it down on the table with a *bang*), and the spiced tobacco *there* (putting his huge clasp-knife two inches from the cup). Then the cat would come along, smell the tobacco, sneeze *kerchoo!*, and in sneezing hit her head against the stone and fall dead. That's the way they killed rabbits in his country. He is always getting off something like this. The other morning I took a walk with him in the woods, and his

talk was extremely humorous, besides being instructive about his part of the country. He comes from the Hérault, between Cette and Montpellier, from the village of Aniane.



St Valéry-en-Caux

May 28, 1917

AS several of the patients are awake and the nurses in a state of unconsciousness, it's up to someone to keep on the job, and I'm that someone. It's just three o'clock, and this coming hour is always the most difficult in which to keep one's eyes pried open, so I will copy in part for you an interesting letter from a god-son in the neighborhood of Monastir. He has been thirty-three days in the first line trenches. He says:

*Nous sommes tous bien fatigués, car depuis un mois passé que nous sommes en première ligne, l'on ne songe guère à nous relever et surtout que nous allons encore attaquer et d'ici peu. Le bombardement a commencé ce matin et c'est un potin infernal que tous ces éclatements qui font tout trembler autour de nous et c'est un véritable spectacle féerique que de voir tous les réseaux ennemis aussi que les tranchées sauter de tous côtés. Les effets de notre artillerie sont terrible, car le terrain commence à être bouleversé. Quand ça s'arrêtera-t-il je l'ignore; en tout cas ce sera pour sortir une fois plus de nos tranchées pour partir en avant. Mais tout ceci est le dernier de*

*mes soucis s'il ne fallait pas songer que malheureusement quelques uns d'entre nous tomberont pour jamais se relever. Mais nous avons du courage car c'est pour le droit et la civilisation du monde que nous combattons et nous espérons que bientôt ce maudit cauchemar sera à tout jamais fini et que la paix va venir nous apporter la tranquillité à tous. Je ne demande qu'une seule chose, être blessé et bientôt de retour dans mon beau pays de France où je pense avoir le bonheur de vous voir. Vous m'excuserez, Chere Petite Marraïne, de mon griffonage de chat, mais je ne suis pas à mon aise pour écrire dans mon trou.*

Here is the poem which was sent to Vera Hale and which arrived when we three, Vera, Miss MacLean and I—the night staff—had gone to the post office for the morning mail:

### CIGARETTES

*(Written in the trenches Nov., 1916, by Corp. Jack Turner.)*

When the cold is making ice-cream of the marrow in your  
bones,  
And you're shaking like a jelly and your feet are dead as  
stones,  
When your clothes and boots and blankets, and your rifle  
and your kit  
Are soaked from hell to breakfast, and the dug-out where  
you sit  
Is leaking like a basket, and upon the muddy floor  
The water lies in filthy pools six inches deep or more,  
Though life seems cold and miserable and all the world is  
wet,  
You'll always get through somehow if you've got a cigarette.

When Fritz is starting something and his guns are on the  
     bust,  
 When the parapet goes up in chunks and settles down in  
     dust,  
 When the roly-poly "rum-jar" comes a-wobbling through the  
     air  
 Till it lands upon a dug-out—and the dug-out isn't there,  
 When the air is full of dust and smoke and scraps of steel  
     and noise,  
 And you think you're booked for golden crowns and other  
     heav'nly joys,  
 When your nerves are all a-tremble and your brain is all  
     a-fret,  
 It isn't half so hopeless if you've got a cigarette.

Then when you stop a good one and the stretcher-bearers  
     come  
 And patch you up with strings and splints and bandages and  
     gum,  
 When you think you've got a million wounds and fifty  
     thousand breaks,  
 And your body's just a blasted sack packed full of pains  
     and aches,  
 Then you feel you've reached the finish, and you're sure  
     your number's up,  
 And you feel as weak as Belgian beer and helpless as a pup,  
 But you know that you're not down and out, and life's  
     worth living yet,  
 When some old war-wise Red Cross guy slips you a cigarette.

I slept to-day from 9:30 to 6:30, and was  
 awakened by an explosion which shook the bed.  
 Nobody knows what it was. A mine-sweeper  
 struck a mine out here the other day and sank  
 within sight of land. Everybody saved.

St Valéry-en-Caux  
June 5, 1917

WE have passed through the loveliest spring for flowers. First such a profusion of jonquils that it was impossible not to walk on them in the woods. Then as they faded the ground was white with anemones, and recently the air was heavy with the scent of wild hyacinths. They form a constant tricolor with the anemones. Finally, the English daisy and gorgeous deep pinks have come—I don't know whether they're wild primroses or wild pinks. However, what most rejoices my soul is the hawthorne. It is everywhere, solid hedges of it, both pink and white. There are such quantities of flowers in the hospital all the time that it's difficult to know where to put them. The men bring in stilted tight bouquets, with no leaves or greenery, made up in the colors of the tricolor, the pinks in the centre, the white anemones next, and the hyacinths round the edge.

The parents of the boy in the next room whose hand I wash daily came to see him one morning, arriving at seven o'clock after having walked twelve kilometers. They were a cunning couple, she in the quaintest, neatest little black bonnet. He was not expecting them, so I led them to the door, told them the number of the bed, and let them go in unheralded. Such kissings and rejoicings! They are farmers in the Pas de Calais, and he got up to go to the station with them the

next morning at four-thirty. As they all three started off the mother rushed back to kiss my hand, saying that I had saved his hand. As though I had had anything to do with it! However, I did put the idea into the nurse's head the first night I was on duty that the boy was suffering and that Dr Hoyle should be wakened and asked if he could not have morphine. The poor boy was in tears when I found him.



L'AMBULANCE AMERICAINE





## *L'Ambulance Américaine*

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Hôtel Prince de Galles  
Rue d'Anjou  
Paris

June 22, 1917

HERE I am again in the big city after the closing of the hospital at St Valéry. I am to go to the Ambulance, beginning work there the first of July. I have been to several *pensions*, seeking accommodation, but as they were all full my future domicile is still uncertain.

To-day we began our activities by going to the Ministry of War to have our brassards stamped and get our *cartes d'identité*, which enable us to travel for half-fare. As we want to go to Dinard and Mont St Michel they will be useful. Then we strolled down through the Porte Maillot to No. 6 Rue Puccini, Dr Blake's hospital, to see Miss Johnson, who used to be at St Valéry. She told us that when they had started to put the hospital in order they found it just as the last occupants had left it—arms and legs in jars, etc. It used to be the hospital of Dr Doyen, and has all the conveniences, such as lifts, electric

lights and bath-rooms, and even a small chapel. It accommodates over three hundred beds, but isn't full now. She told us that very few wounded were being sent to Paris, for fear of a revolution being started by those unpatriotic and inconsiderate people who think the war has lasted long enough. The Ambulance, for the same reason, has many empty beds.

I called upon Miss Grylls, who came over on the boat with Doc and me and who got work at the *Secours Duryea*. She wrote me that she had changed to the *Comité Franco-Américain contre les Impotences Fonctionnelles*, and I went out to see her. Miss Cassette is at the head of it and has recently received the *Légion d'Honneur* for her services. What she does is to make special appliances for the *mutilés*. She has swings for the treatment of broken legs and arms, special shoes for drop-foot, which we see so often, and appliances by which men who have had their shoulders shot away can regain the use of the arm. Really she's a wonder, and the government has just ordered a thousand of her *leg apparati*.

The "bust-up" at St Valéry had its humorous side. When Dr Fitch announced that he was going to leave, M. Hauville was sore as a crab. Dr Fitch immediately began packing his belongings, and as almost everything in the hospital had been sent from America to him, not to the hospital, most of the movables belonged to him. M. Hauville was frightfully incensed and took

steps to prevent the laundry (500 sheets and shirts, socks, towels, drawers, etc. in proportion) from coming back, so we had no clean clothes to give out. Of course I learned it from the men, as the night staff gives the clean clothes along with the morning baths. That was fixed up somehow and things ran smoothly for a while. Then the Hauvilles locked up the service-rooms and everything in them. When Miss White, my former Bryn Mawr English reader, was taking instruments to be packed, Mme Godichard, in the absence in Paris of M. Hauville, took it upon herself physically to prevent their exit from the service room. Lawyers were called in to settle the question and M. Hauville got mighty little. The packing was done in the garage, and one day the door was locked so that everything had to be dumped on the side-walk and taken in the ambulance to the hotel and packed there. I was just getting into bed one morning when I heard the ambulance drive up, and looking out saw two white enamel washstands taken out of the ambulance. They had come from the operating room. That night at four-thirty, just as I had waked and two of the seven first-floor men who were leaving on seven days furlough and then back to the front, I heard water flowing onto the floor and shrieks of: "*Mon mari! Mon mari!*" I saw Mme Godichard in bare feet flying down the hall, her hair and nightgown streaming out behind her, to M. Hauville's room. Wondering what had happened I strolled down the hall to

the operating room and saw the water shooting from the faucets where the wash-stands had been removed. I tried to turn it off but was not altogether successful and soon M. Hauville, in a brown-speckled robe-de-chambre girt tight around his waist with a string, appeared at my elbow. Realizing the value of self-effacement, I left to wake the rest of my *blessés*, and then took up my position in the service-room doorway where I could watch all the developments. Blanche, the night-woman, was splashing in felt slippers, and Mme Godichard, in her bare-feet and her night-gown draped about her knees, was paddling back and forth in the two inches of water that flooded the operating-room floor and adjacent hall. By that time the *blessés*, who had only shoes, socks, puttees and trousers to put on, were beginning to peer round the corner and wade through the pool on their heels. M. Hauville, hearing in sharp tones from Mme G. the words: "*Si vous venez aider au lieu de regarder, ça irait mieux*", which I think were really directed to me, hastened upstairs to rouse the first floor orderly from his matinal slumbers. When he came back I was still propping up the side of the service-room door. Wishing to show some interest and sympathy with his plight, I said: "*Comment est-ce arrivé, M. Hauville?*" He bellowed in reply: "*Comment est-ce arrivé? Parce qu'il ne peut plus commettre de vol il démolit ma maison pendant mon absence! Je vais le foutre à la porte, ce saligaud!*" Then he asked how it happened that I, being in the ser-



vice, did not know what took place; I told him that I was on night duty, and what took place during the day, *ça ne me regarde pas*.



American Ambulance  
Neuilly-sur-Seine

July 17, 1917

THERE'S one more bit of news. I am to change my job. I'm perfectly happy at the Ambulance, I adore my nurse, there's a Bryn Mawr auxiliary in my ward whom I like immensely, and I like the men and they like me. And they are entertaining. One of them, Bèchereau by name, wounded in the thigh and his leg on a prop at right angles to his bed, a big man with an enormous appetite, affected to be annoyed because the orderly offered him a second helping the other day: "*Mais, il veut me donner l'air d'un gourmand!*" Since then I call him "*Petit moi-neau*" and tell him he doesn't eat enough to keep a bird alive. I've said it more than once, but it always draws a boisterous laugh. Norman Hall, author of "Kitchener's Mob", is another of my patients. He was in the English army and one day his captain sent for him and told him he was discharged. He didn't know why but thought his parents had done it. He returned to America and was sent by his paper to France to report the Lafayette Esquadrille. When he got

back he couldn't resist the temptation and enlisted with them. He was up one day when six German machines attacked him. He was hit in the left shoulder and lost consciousness, but came to in time to make a safe landing and then fainted again.



Neuilly-sur-Seine  
July 18, 1917

I'M in the big ward now. There's a concert going on downstairs, a lady with clasped hands, a stiff collar and red necktie is singing. I'm waiting for a man to come out of ether.

My new job may be driving a Ford camionnette for the British Fund visiting French hospitals to find their needs which the British Fund supplies.

This hospital is to be militarized and the American army takes it over next Saturday.

CAMIONNETTE DRIVER





### *Camionnette Driver*

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French Wounded Emergency Fund  
Oeuvre Anglais pour les Blessés Français  
Bastion 55, Baraque 7, Porte Dauphine  
Paris, August 15, 1917

THIS is my new job, where I've been now two days. I've been helping the woman mechanic go over a car that has just come in from Nesle, a town in the reconquered region which this organization is building up to such a condition that the remaining survivors can live there until the government takes it in hand and rebuilds the whole thing. Yesterday I cleaned spark plugs, assisted at the removal of a carburetor, its inside inspection and replacement, helped take the wheels off, cleaned out the superfluous grease and put the wheels on again. Today we pumped up eight inner tubes, found four that needed repairing: two had bad valves and two needed patches. This afternoon we took off the two brake-rods and shortened them and put them back. Then I was taken into the Bois and given a lesson in driving. It's so strange not to have a

foot accelerator nor a gear-shift worked by hand. You see it's a Ford camionnette that I am to drive.

Miss Wyld, the "big boss", is a corker. She's English and her hair is short, and she's the kind of a person to whom you'd tell all your past history, sure of interest and sympathy. Apparently, she's very eager for me to get started at my work, which, as I've told you, is driving in the Isère, inspecting all the hospitals of the department except those under the French Red Cross to see what they need in the way of supplies. I've signed with the organization for three months, and two of these I spend in the Isère, and the third in the sixteenth region, which is the southern part of France, west of the Rhône, including Montpellier, Narbonne and Carcassonne. I shall be there the last month. I am to act as chauffeur and mechanic and plan the route. My future car and my companion are in the Isère now, and I go down by train as soon as I get my driving license, which I hope will be in the course of a week.

I left the Ambulance because there wasn't enough to do. Anyway, I felt that I had learned as much as I could of auxiliary nursing. I asked Mrs Monroe, the head of the auxiliaries, if I might go (having already got this new job), and she let me off in a week, making me promise to let her know if I ever wanted to come back, etc., etc. In other words I left her in the best of feeling, whereas two other auxiliaries for whom I had got jobs in the same organization told her



they were leaving (instead of asking her permission to go), and she said they couldn't go until the seventeenth, and perhaps not until the first of September, and she doesn't want to see hide nor hair of them again.

All my men were sorry to have me go, and said: "*Quest-ce qu'on va faire sans notre petit papillon bleu?*" One of them, a man from the invaded district, whose father and two younger sisters are in the hands of the Germans, and a brother a prisoner, had remarked one day when he saw me climbing up on the porch-railing to reach something: "*Il fera beau demain, les singes grimpent.*" Nevertheless, he is a very good sort, and this is what he wrote in my book: "*Dédié à Miss Hardon, mon infirmière. A la veille de votre départ, il m'est un grand devoir ainsi qu'un grand plaisir de vous témoigner, par quelques mots, le regard, le respect que j'éprouve pour vous, et à justes raisons.*"

I was particularly pleased with that, as he wasn't really my *blessé*, but I had helped out in his section many times, and he told me I was the only person who could get his fractured leg back into the *appareil* without hurting him. He's a man of some education, too, learned English in the trades-school, has a tooth-brush mustache—such a rarity among the French, as they usually have thin, scraggly ones, with long points, which they twirl constantly. Also, he has beautiful white teeth—another rarity—handsome large blue eyes, and startling up-standing hair. Between his eyes are two deep furrows, from con-

stant frowning, and consequently he always looks as though he were very cross. At first, I hardly dared go near him because of it.



Hôtel Paris-Lyons Palace  
Paris, August 26, 1917

Dear Mother,

THIS is just a note to tell you I am starting on my travels. I am spending the night in a good hotel near the Gare de Lyon, as my train leaves at 7:45 tomorrow morning for Lyons. Sunday or Monday, whichever I prefer, it will depend on how rested I feel, I go on to Chambéry, Savoie, to join Miss Bainbridge-Bell, who is to be the companion on my wanderings and is the delegate who inspects the hospitals. She is now being driven by Miss Halsey, an American girl who wants to leave to go home on the 1st of September. I am to take her place, so I don't begin my duties until she goes. I join them in Chambéry just to drive up with them to Lyons, visiting with them the hospitals where they stop *en route*. I don't know either of them, but Mrs Foley spoke of Miss Bainbridge-Bell today as a "dear," and said she was sure I'd like her. We are to spend two months in the Dauphinée and Savoie, visiting all the hospitals, and then go for another month to the part of France north of the eastern Pyrenees, including Narbonne, Montpellier and

Carcassonne. This district should take another three months, but I have signed only for three in all and think that when they are over I shall go back into auxiliary work.

I sha'n't dare to come home and tell people what an easy and delightful time I had at St Valéry, if you read my letters to other persons and make me out a hero. But really the night-duty up there was the greatest pleasure I had, although it was somewhat fatiguing, as the days were so glorious it was hard to go to bed when morning came. But the responsibility of being the sole boss of my twenty-six men of the ground floor and being practically in charge of the thirty on the first floor, was real happiness. And already I miss my Ambulance men, too, although I've been away from them only a little over a week. I was so touched the other day when I went back there to visit and found one of my men of whom I'd taken sole charge, except to do his dressings, which the doctor always does, just coming out of ether. I bent over to look at him and he was pale and yellow and traces of tears on his face. He wasn't really "out" then, but he turned slowly towards me. The glazed stupid look went out of his eyes and he took my hand saying: "*Mademoiselle, on m'a possédé en votre absence, on m'a opéré et je n'aime pas l'éther, et j'ai mal au coeur, et ma blessure me fait mal*"—just like a fretful child telling his troubles to his mother.

I took my examination for a driver's license today. Miss Clifton, the regular driver and me-

chanic, took me down to 4 rue de Castellane, just back of the Madeleine. There I picked up the examiner. I cranked the car, and it started at the second turn. Bearing Miss Clifton's instructions well in mind, I got the car going fairly fast before coming into "high," and the instructor said: "*Très bien, Mademoiselle, très bien*". At the corner of the Boulevard Haussmann and the Printemps, in the midst of cars and all kinds of traffic, he got into another auto and told me to follow. The excitement that I was under was so great—for you see I *had* to pass, as the Fund expected me to leave for Lyons tomorrow and Miss Clifton had just assured me that I wouldn't pass—that my foot shook so I could hardly keep it on the pedal. However, I got back all right and my permit will follow me to Lyons tomorrow.



Hôtel de France  
Chambéry  
Savoie  
August 28, 1917

I CAME up from Lyons (or rather I came south-east from Lyons) yesterday morning, *via* Culoz and around the charming Lac Bourget, through Aix. I travelled in uniform and got much attention.

Miss Bainbridge-Bell and Miss Halsey were

waiting at this hotel for me. The former was well-dressed, wore a blue and white striped linen suit—made very much like those you and I got at Creed's so many years ago when we were young and charming. Miss Halsey wore khaki. She's an American and a great friend of Miss Baker, that peach of an American who was at 70 rue Charles Laffitte and really put me onto this job through Miss Halsey. I have come down here to take her place and she left for Paris last night, so I am now alone with Miss B. B. and the Ford. We gave it the "once over" before lunch, and after lunch I greased and oiled it thoroughly, cleaned the spark plugs and tightened the reverse. Then we took it out and I think the clutch slips. Then Miss B. B. took us to a cake shop for tea and cakes, and I made the mistake of asking for tea when I should have known that Chambéry is famous for its chocolate.

11:30 A. M.

I had to stop at that moment in my chronicle because Miss Halsey told me that Miss B. B. is a prompt person and she had specified 9:30 as our starting hour. I had to allow at least half an hour to fill the radiator and the gasoline tank and pump up the left front tube, which is leaking. The poor thing must have been almost dry because I put in four cans of gasoline and it wasn't yet full; but Miss B. B. came along, so I "called it a day," cranked the engine, took off my black apron, and we started. I haven't received my driver's license yet, though I passed

my examination, so I have to be very careful not to have an accident. Anyway, a Ford is the most bizarre concoction to anyone who has been driving a regular car. They call it fool-proof, but I think it's anything but that.

We chugged slowly through the town to the big hospital which was built as a home for the aged. When the war began it was turned over to the wounded soldiers. They have eye wards, wards for ordinary wounded, consumptives and contagious diseases; and in this last building in a cell they have a boche suffering from erysipelas. We got up the hill and found a sharp turn to the right, which I couldn't make without turning around between high stone walls; the road sloped down to these walls, and besides I was on an incline.

In the space of twenty feet I stalled the car five times. It was in the broiling hot sun. Men hearing the racing engine crowded to the windows, others gathered in crowds in the yard, children popped out of adjacent door-ways, and I was the cynosure of all eyes. However, I resolved to get the car into the courtyard, and without an accident finally succeeded with the perspiration streaming down my face. A kind soldier at last came to my rescue, asking what was the trouble, and I confided to him that it was nothing but my lack of experience. He sympathized, saying: "*En effet ces voitures Ford sont très bizarres. Je ne saurais pas la conduire moi-même.*"



Miss B. B. carries a long printed list of supplies, including instruments, hot water bottles, back-rests, air cushions, rubber gloves, linen, bandages, crutches, everything usable in a hospital and presents it to the *médecin-chef* of each hospital visited, asking him to choose what he needs. He makes out a list, giving the number of beds and occupants. She then writes a report and sends it to the head office in Lowndes Square, London. There a committee passes upon the request, and then makes up a bundle and sends it out. After she has seen the *médecin-chef*, she visits the wards to see what further she thinks is needed.

This hospital used to be a convent of the Sacré-Coeur and all the nurses are sisters. They're not very up-to-date in the matter of hygiene, but they mean well. For instance, as you probably know, and as I learned recently, when a sister is received into the order as a nun she is given a dress which is blessed by the highest church dignitary that can be found at the moment and she wears it day in and day out until it drops to pieces like the one-horse shay. Of course it can't be fumigated, as it would then lose its sanctity, so she wears it during dressings, in the contagious wards, and everywhere, and only within the last few years by special papal decree was she allowed to roll up her sleeves. The holy mother showed us round, first through the eye wards, then the wounded, and the linen room, and then to an out-building where the con-

sumptives are. The mattresses were painfully thin, there were few pillows, and no amusements at all except a few games of checkers.

We interviewed the *chirurgien-chef* to see what he'd like on the list, and he came to splints. He asked if they were wire ones, and the nurse got out some of theirs to show us. The padding had been removed but there were still bits of cotton stuck in the wire, and I couldn't help thinking of St Valéry and the Ambulance. There when a splint has served its purpose all the cotton is carefully picked out, then it is thoroughly scrubbed with soap and water and a brush, and then disinfected with javelle water. Here apparently they didn't dream of doing that. How many times I've scrubbed and disinfected them!

That is a very large hospital with many large sunny courts, and from the balcony they look over the roofs of the town to the rugged mountains beyond. And the air is so good! The two low buildings on either side are the consumptive ward and the contagious diseases. I'm mighty glad now that I went to St Valéry instead of to a tubercular center in Brittany, as I almost did with Miss Murray who was on the boat and wanted me to join her.

This afternoon we got the gasoline and then went to the last of the Chambéry hospitals. It really is a "reform" center, where the men come to pass the "reform," and are either returned to civil life or sent back into the auxiliary service. They are all *mutilés*, amputated, drop hands or feet, blind, deaf or something of the sort. They

are healed when they get there and rarely stay more than a week without passing the "reform" committee and being sent on. If they are returned to civil life they are given civilian clothes and their uniforms are taken and sent to the depot, fumigated, and given to someone in the auxiliary service behind the lines. Every soldier who is sent back to the front is equipped anew. When he comes out of a hospital he has usually seven days furlough. Sometimes he gets a longer one, but that is determined by the board that passes upon his condition. For instance, our St Valéry men all went to Dieppe to be given the "once over," and on that hung their length of furlough. One small boy, Chabod, with delicate, feminine hands and arms and big brown eyes, got twenty-one days. After their furlough they return to the recruiting station and are re-equipped and sent off either to rejoin their former regiment or into a new one.

I had a novel experience tonight. A train-load of Tommies was passing through bound, they said, for Palestine. Miss B. B., two English nurses, and Mr and Mrs Percy (he drives an English ambulance here) and I went down to the station, laden with cigarettes and English and American newspapers. The train pulled in slowly at 9:30 and I took the head of the train. The men tried to speak French, and when I finished the sentence in English they exclaimed at hearing English spoken. They tried to buy the cigarettes, but I gave them away and they were delighted. They clamored for the newspapers

and were much interested when I said they were American. One man asked where I came from, and when I said, America, he hung out of the door and grabbed my hand and said: "We're cousins. Give three cheers for the United States!" By that time a ring of khaki had formed around me and a more deafening roar went up than from many a Harvard cheering section. One man asked when I came, and when I said, last December, said: "That was after we discovered you. I'm jolly glad we did." Then they asked if it was true about the Milan strikes, if Turin was in Italy, and how far we were from the border. Also, if the mountains they had just come through were the Alps. One man asked if I was an American and knew Boston. He said he had friends there and wondered if I could get a message through for him. I said I'd try, and he gave me an address in Worcester, Mass., of his sister. He said he hadn't had news from her for a long time and was worried. Poor fellow! Heaven knows what's waiting for him in a few weeks! He thanked me so cordially when I said I'd write.

They were a musical crowd, singing "Tipperary," "Keep the Home Fires Burning," "It's a Long, Long Trail." When I sang tenor to this last song they cheered and started again. The car I was standing beside sang faster than the one ahead, so I beat time for them and then they whooped: "A cheer for the band-master!"—and then another mighty roar. They stayed twenty

minutes, and when the train pulled out all wanted to shake hands, and I ran up the platform but only as far as the roof reached, for it was raining. It seems like a dream now that I'm sitting in the peaceful bedroom of this hotel, with the steady drop of rain outside and the occasional shriek of a steam whistle and the chug of an engine.

On the platform when I was giving out cigarettes were two swarthy soldiers in blue. I asked if they were French, but they were Italians bound for St Etienne near Lyons. They said they couldn't make the Tommies understand, so I translated while the Englishmen stood round in open-mouthed circles. They're all great strong men, thoroughly able to take care of themselves, yet you feel as though you wanted to protect them and make them happy. If they take your hand you don't blush and stammer and draw away, on the contrary you squeeze their hands as a matter of course and wish them good-luck. When little Boudon at the Ambulance, the boy who swore so terribly, was coming out of ether and was groping blindly for something, I took his hand and he immediately went to sleep. Again, when I went back to visit and found another of my men coming out of ether, he took my hand and told me how they had taken possession of him and how he hated ether, just like a small child. Yet he is a married man and much older than I, but my feeling was that he was a child and needed soothing. They're all

children as soon as they get on a uniform, particularly when they are in a hospital or leaving for the front.

Tomorrow Miss B. B. and I leave for Vienne, visiting a hospital on the way, and reaching Lyons Saturday, where we stay three weeks. Then we start down into the 16th region. I arrived just too late to do Grenoble and the environs, as that was the last stop. Also, Miss B. B. and Miss Halsey were at Brides-les-Bains. This place makes me think of it a little. That is, it has the same kind of near mountains and the little river running through it.

I visited today the chapel attached to the ancestral palace of the Dukes of Savoy. When I entered and looked up at the ceiling I thought: "Great Caesar! This is as good as Windsor." A second glance showed me that all the feathery Gothic arch-tracery was painted. Even the saints were painted into fake niches, and the marble altar was painted papier maché. Such a pity! But I suppose they couldn't afford anything else.

I'm getting more used to the car and Miss B. B. is all right. She doesn't clutch the edge and she doesn't ask to get out. By tomorrow night I ought to be fairly expert.



Vienne  
August 30, 1917

YESTERDAY we had a thrilling day. We went over one hundred kilometers, first to St Jean de



Bournay to see a hospital. It is partly a school; there is only one orderly, no nurse, and the men do the work. They are mostly convalescents, and I have rarely seen any place so clean. We were shown over it by the *médecin-chef*, a dear old man who has been the civilian doctor for thirty-five years. Three administrators accompanied us, all fine-looking men, peasants and evidently interested in the welfare of the hospital. From there they took us five kilometers to Bonne-Vaux, an annex. It used to be a private house and is set on rising land overlooking a wood. The soldiers have planted a large vegetable garden, and all kinds of lovely flowers. It looks like a gentleman's summer estate. It is a *hôpital de régime*, which means a rest-cure. The food is mostly eggs from their many chickens, milk and quantities of vegetables. They have preserved green vegetables in large crocks with salt. There is no woman on the place, but a sergeant in charge, who loves flowers and who paints. It is a charming spot, for sixty men. We had a delicious luncheon out under the trees with the *médecin-chef*, who folded our napkins in elaborate style. I really hated to go away.

Next we went to La Côte St André, a huge centre for tuberculosis, and then to a small convent of Sisters of the Trinity. They wear an immense blue and red cross on the front of their bodices. The mother superior of an adjacent house and a sister had come over in a donkey cart. They showed us their garden, gave us some glorious peaches and coffee, and we went on to

another hospital at Le Péage de Rousillon. This hospital was dreadfully poor, and after the *médecin-chef* had made out a list from our lists of the things he wanted, he took us to his house, proudly offering us some English tea. He was a friend of the interpreter at the Chinese cantonment and took us to see the place. It seems strange to see all these Chinamen in France. They are not the immobile lot that stand on the street corners in Chinatown (San Francisco) but they grin and mutter at one another and were as pleased to see us as we to see them. They had their hair about seven inches long and shaved on top. They live in barracks and do all their own work, and are constantly taking douches. They have cats, dogs and birds everywhere. I asked them to sing, and the head policeman rushed off and came back with two men. One of them sat on a bench and twanged a strange instrument of three strings, and the other paced up and down behind him, emitting strange loud sounds with his mouth wide open. They slid up and down on their half-tones in a weird way. Just as we were leaving, the boches, who have also a cantonment there, came down to take the night-shift.



Globe & Cecil Hotel  
Lyon-Bellecour  
September 6, 1917

WE had a very interesting day, but then our days are all interesting and all different. At 8 A. M.

we were at the station to assist at the reception of the second train-load of English soldiers and officers repatriated from Germany. Most of them had been interned a year in Switzerland. There were five hundred of them, of whom 64 were officers and 15 were stretcher cases. The *sous-directeur du Service de Santé* had given us some pink cards, familiarly known as *coupe-fil*, to let us in to any repatriation reception during the year. There was a crowd on the platform and many nurses in Red Cross uniforms, carrying in one hand the box into which they ask the crowd to pour coppers, and in the other hand a basket of *boutonnieres* of artificial flowers, the white daisy, the red poppy and the blue bachelor's button, tied with a white ribbon inscribed with letters of gold, *Vive la France!* When one of the nurses shook her box at me I asked if I could buy a *boutonniere* but she said they were for the soldiers. The posts of the platform were decorated with groups of French flags, and along the platform were lined up French soldiers and zouaves who are at the forts here not yet sufficiently recovered from their wounds to return to the front. On the platform were prefects, the American consul, the English vice-consul, an English staff officer with the red band around his hat, various French generals and other notables.

The train pulled slowly in, promptly at 8:30, to the tune of "God Save the King", and the Tommies hung out of the car windows with their hats off, while the French soldiers along

the platform stood at attention and not a sound went up from the crowd. Then the tune changed to the "Marseillaise" and finally "The Star Spangled Banner." When the music stopped and the train also, Miss B. B. started forward to the nearest car window and shook hands with the men, and said she was glad to see them back. I was somewhat amazed, as this was an official French reception and we were right in front of the generals and others, where a policeman had told us *we couldn't be*. But as we wear the Red Cross brassard, the policeman merely made a mild protest and promptly looked the other way. The zouaves looked somewhat amazed too, but as we were talking to the soldiers in their strange foreign tongue and as the zouaves' hands were entirely occupied with their guns, and the consuls and generals looked on benignly and also somewhat awed, no one said anything. Meanwhile the French nurses were distributing their boutonnières to the Tommies. Miss B. B. went on from window to window, but I stood a minute talking with the first man. He had been two years in Germany and one in Switzerland. I thought this an excellent moment to begin distributing my half of the 500 postcards that we had brought with us, so I went slowly down the platform. The generals and reception committee began to get active, and I'd carom off an English repatriated captain onto a frock-coated, silk-hatted diplomat.

Meanwhile, the staff officer had gone up the line and was getting the officers off the train and

they were filing past to the tune of "Tipperary." The men, now brilliant with *boutonnieres* and fresh flowers in their caps, were more interested in this than in the post cards, so I turned my back on the train and from the vantage point of my seclusion, watched the *défilé*. There were Scotchmen in plaid trousers—not kilts—and their caps with bright plaid edge and long black streamers behind. The others were all in khaki, and you could tell a King's Own from a Welch Fusilier only by the letters and brass insignia on his shoulders and cap. There were only three with amputated legs, and I saw no amputated arms, though there may have been some. These men are all *grand blessés*, and the international agreement is that no repatriated men are to be used again on the front. England and France will adhere to this, but who knows about Germany? Doubtless these men, although I must say they looked extremely well, have some ailment from disease or wounds that would incapacitate them for further active service. They say that the change in them from the time they get to Switzerland until they leave is enormous.

I began to think it was time for us to be getting down into the *Salle des Pas Perdus*, or in other words, the waiting room, and got Miss B. B. by the arm and steered her down through the underground passage to the door. It was there that the welcoming addresses were to take place. Of course we couldn't get in and a guard indicated the *porte du nord*. So we flew back, brandishing our pink cards, but couldn't find a

north door, and as no one knows anything at such an event, and all the guards look blank and tell you another door, we dashed up and down various platforms inside and out. Finally, in desperation, I tried the barred southern entrance through a café; a corduroyed station porter came running up and said we couldn't go in. I did the clinging-vine act successfully, showing him my card and telling him no one would let us in and these were my compatriots. He was obliging and answered: "*Si ce sont vos compatriotes c'est la moindre des choses de vous laisser les voir,*" and turned his back to lead the way in through the café. I seized Miss B. B. by the arm and pulled her along. I felt like saying: "Stick with me and you'll wear diamonds", but I didn't. At the door of the waiting-room there were various *gens d'armes*, but they looked the other way when they saw Miss B. B.'s *brassard* and my uniform, and we strode in as though we owned the place.

The Tommies were all sitting on the benches, packed knee to knee. A platform in the middle was weighted with palms, and there were present the English staff officer, who was reading a speech in good French but badly pronounced, *M. le Préfet, M. le directeur du Service de Santé, M.M. les officiers, M.M. les, etc., etc.* It was the English officer's speech of thanks for the preceding speeches of welcome. Afterwards he spoke in English to the men and ended with asking them to give "three rousing English cheers, taking your time from me". He took his



hat off and waved it, saying: "Hip, hip", and all the 500 Tommies took their caps off and joined in the "Hurrah", three times.

Then they subsided onto their benches again, and the nurses got busy passing to each man a cup of wine from the long table decked with flowers that went down one side of the room. There were few women there. Again the golden moment seemed to me to have arrived to distribute the postcards and the men took them with avidity, clamoring for them before I could give them out. We had spent most of the evening and all of the ink in our pens writing "On active service" on each one, so that they could be mailed without stamps. Though we had more than 500 they gave out before we got all around.

As the welcoming was over, we went out onto the platform to see the line of automobiles taking the men to the hospital, where they have a medical examination, eat and spend the day, as they go on again to-night. Opposite the platform was a company of *cuirassiers* with their brass helmets and horsehair streamers. Along the platform was another company of infantry. The officers went in first, and as they passed the crowd cheered and clapped and the soldiers and *cuirassiers* stood at attention. We were on the curb in the middle of the platform surrounded by the staff-officer, two French generals, and the prefect, in black with many black-braided scrawls down the back of his tight-fitting short coat, a silver braid stripe down his trouser-leg and silver acorns round his hat—a gorgeous creature.

Legions of honor fluttered in the breeze, and an obliging French captain who stood behind us told us who the people were and that only a high officer of the Legion of Honor can wear the decoration hanging at his throat. The common or garden variety wears the ribbon fastened through a button-hole of the lapel.

This afternoon we went to the Ecole Joffre, the first school founded in France for the re-education of the *mutilés*. We went as usual to offer gifts but they would have none. However, we saw the classes. Classes in *comptabilité*, which means the management of a shop, in which a man learns to write, relearns to write with his left hand in many cases, learns to figure, of course, and also learns a modern language. He may choose which, and usually chooses Italian. There are also classes in typewriting with one hand, usually the left. It's wonderful the rapidity the men acquire. Also, they do bead work, make necklaces and bags, and do bookbinding. Most of the men are one-handed, though some of them have both hands—but no legs. They learn mechanical drawing and painting and sketching, the remarkable thing being that most of those who make great successes with their pencils were formerly dressmakers and gardeners. This mechanical drawing is in connection with the toy-making, which goes on in the various processes from the uncut timber to the final varnishing. All stages are learned by all the men, whether one- or two-handed. I wonder whether all nations are as adaptable as the

French, for the changes in method and occupation entailed by this war are, of course, radical. Yet everything goes on as before.



Lyons  
September 15th, 1917

YOU remember how Uncle Si came to New York and was shown a room and bath, and how he sighed at the sight of the white porcelain tub to think that Saturday night was still a long way off? Well, it's the same all over France. Here at the Hôtel du Globe there is a washstand with running water, but the way I know that Saturday has come again is that I burn my hands in the morning wash. Of course on other days in a well-regulated hotel you can get some one to bring you a pitcher of hot water, but it takes time as it has to be heated specially, and usually I don't bother. Sunday also the hot water runs, as Saturdays and Sundays have been set aside as the national bathing nights.

My three months with this organization are up on November 25th, but Miss B. B. has several times expressed the hope that I will finish the 16th region with her, and perhaps even go on longer. After the 16th she doesn't know exactly what she will do, and of course many things will affect my decision to stay on, as, for example, the region to which she is sent. Just now the Fund

is very much engrossed in civilian work. It has adopted three reconquered villages, one of which is Nesle, and is busy putting up temporary shelters for the remaining inhabitants. This doesn't interest me particularly. The soldiers in the hospitals are to my mind more important than the civilians, because on their morale and speedy recovery depends the safety of the civilians; whereas putting a roof over the heads of the population in all the reconquered towns will never help to oust the Germans from the remainder.

This city seems full of Arabs and Senegalese. Scattered thickly over the country are vegetable gardens with signs up saying to which regiment and company they belong. I travel in uniform and get much attention.



Lyons  
September 26, 1917

WE are still in Lyons though we have finished the hospitals and are ready to start for Mende in the Lozère. We are just waiting for my *sauf conduit* and my driving license, which are to come from the Paris headquarters, and without which we dare not start, as we may be held up on the road at any moment and be asked for our credentials. One day coming back from Chazy d'Azergeres, a charming village perched on a hill-

top about thirty kilometers from Lyons, a soldier sprang out at us waving a red flag, and we stopped. He carried a gun, and I was taking no chances on its being loaded. A policeman and a soldier approached us from either side, and the original man with the red flag went off to hold up other traffic.

I have not been asked for a paper of any kind, except when I tried to get a ticket ahead of time for Chambéry, and as the route I chose led me through what is, I believe, *territoire franc*, I had to get my *permit de séjour* stamped for it. When I went to the *commissaire* and asked him to fix it for me, he shrugged his shoulders and answered that it was out of the question, but I produced my *carnet de dame infirmière militaire* with the *carte d'identité* of the *service de santé*, which are both comparatively rare, and my *feuille d'immatriculation* from Paris, and my passport, my *carnet rouge*, which allows me to go into the war zone and which is always a guarantee even when it has expired. By the time I had brought out the last document his eyes were standing out of his head, and with the utmost politeness he said my papers were all in order and the matter could be arranged without delay, whereupon he stamped the *permit de séjour*, and off I went.

You remember my visit to the Chinese cantonment? Well, we were then taken to the German prison camp and conversed with the German cook, a Hanoverian. He looked fat and rosy. A Saxon in a green cap was the "kitchen maid."

There were Austrians as well as Germans among the prisoners. We were taken into the dormitories, which have narrow wooden beds with no head- or foot-boards, and the room white-plastered. Above the beds—there were four rows of them—was a shelf on which were boxes containing the men's possessions. What interested me most were their photographs of wives and children, often in the carved wooden frames, painted red and green, that you see so frequently in German stores and buy as the specialty of the country. The men had made them in their leisure moments. It was chiefly the Hungarians who had them.

After we had been all through the place, and had even seen their shower-baths, the men came back from the munition factory, where they had been working. There is a night and day shift, and this was the day shift coming back. We had met the night shift going on duty when we left the Chinese. They lined up in the quadrangle, and the roll was called. Then they hurried to the kitchen and carried out bowls of soup and bread and dished them into their plates, which they had brought from the dormitories. The Austrians have the same food as their French guards, but the Germans have "reciprocal" food, that is the same as the French prisoners in Germany: seven hundred grams of bread a day—not quite a pound and a half—and meat twice a week.

There was no barbed wire around the camp, but the buildings constituted the wall, and the



entrance was a high wooden door guarded by a sentry inside and out. Miss B. B. had spent many winters in a small town in Bavaria, and she wondered whether any of its inhabitants were in that camp, so the commandant called a Prussian who spoke French and asked him, and he went off and brought back another soldier. While Miss B. B. was talking with the man, I looked at the Prussian. He couldn't have been more than twenty-seven or eight, of medium height, but what impressed me was the look in his eye. Of course as a prisoner he is docile, but once let him get the upper hand, and look out! It wasn't exactly a look of suppressed hatred, but it was the keen watchful look ready to strike, given the opportunity. One can well imagine men like him, cold as steel and as hard, doing the things attributed to the Germans. And, perhaps I told you, the day Etienne Bastide spent with us, he told us that when his company was in Nieuport, Belgium, in 1915, they were opposite alternating Prussians and Bavarians. They used to chat with the Bavarians and throw bread over to them and receive cigarettes in exchange. When they got newspapers containing caricatures of Wilhelm, the Crown Prince and Hindenburg, they'd pass them over to the Bavarians, who would reciprocate with caricatures of Joffre and Poincaré. Also, the Bavarians would notify them when they were going to attack or to shell the trenches, and when either side was repairing its wire entanglements the other side did not fire. One day a prisoner going back to

headquarters met a Frenchman whom he had known before the war, and the Frenchman took him to the advance post, and he and his comrades gave him a "big feed" and they had a regular party. Before going back to headquarters he asked to throw a note over to the German trench saying he had been captured, and soon after his brother and some of his companions came and gave themselves up. Also, others sent a note over saying that if a French sergeant would come to a certain shell-hole at a given hour, others would come over and surrender, but the commander, fearing a trap, wouldn't allow it. When the Bavarians were to be relieved they would notify the French, telling them not to fire, and put up a little flag in the corner of the trench at the time they were going, saying also if the Prussians were relieving them to hit them for all they were worth. When the Prussians arrived these amenities ceased and the French retired to their dug-outs during the Prussian occupation, but when the Bavarians returned they took down their flag and the mutual good feeling was restored. All this took place after the command had been issued forbidding the talking between the French and German lines, but Etienne thought his regiment was to be sent again to Flanders, and he looked upon it as being *en repos*. He was dreading going back, as he said his regiment was no longer at Craonne, but near the fort of Malmaison, too near for effective artillery action, and the prospects were for a speedy attack.

I've seen in the papers that his prophecy was realized, and I had a letter from him yesterday. Among other things he says (the spelling is his own): "*Je serai très heureux si la journée que j'ai passé à Lyon se renouvele souvent, mais malheureusement ici parmi ce bruit d'enfer je ne vois passer que des voitures de la croix rouge et c'est avec tristesse que je regarde s'éloigner c'es voitures en pensant que le 13 Septembre je roulais dans une de ces voitures et dont le chauffeur été une charmante Demoiselle accompagnée de Miss Bell.*" He says they have three days in the trenches and then "*vingt-quatres heures de repos où se nettoyer*".

I think I wrote you that he was to come, but not of his visit. I knew his train arrived at 7 A. M., but as he was to see some friends I did not anticipate an early visit. However, about 8:30 word came that he was downstairs, and I sent down asking him to return for 12:30 lunch. He came, and while eating, his napkin tucked in his collar and his *képi* on his head, told us tales of Nieuport. We had some hospitals to visit, so we took him along, seated in the tonneau on a can of gasoline. I didn't visit the hospitals but stayed outside chatting with him. He's just as big and cheerful a kid as he was at St Valéry, and I like him immensely, because while he's always engaged in some amusing foolery he never even verges on being "fresh" or assuming.

There were two trains that night at seven and nine, but he was making for the seven o'clock so as to be sure and be back on time. He had kept

his *képi* on at table because the army regulation is practically a shaved head, and when he went to ask for his furlough he was taking no chances on having it refused because of the length of his hair, and so indulged in the hideous short cut before seeing the major. He's a "sight," and so kept his hat on.

I had an early dinner with him and went to the train to see him off. On the platform we found his sergeant, a self-confident youth with a tightly curled black mustache, of which he was evidently proud. He told us with glory that he was three days late returning from his furlough but that he had stayed to help his parents with the *vendange*. For my benefit, I suppose, he said he'd hate as a result to lose the two stripes he'd worked five years to get. Etienne was wise when we met him to introduce me as his *marraine*, because a *marraine* is a person for whom one would naturally stop off a day, and whom a soldier regards with respect and admiration, particularly if she is a foreigner. I anticipated that the farewell might be difficult and that the dreaded *cafard* might show itself, so kept up a continuous chatter, telling all the amusing things I could think of. Imagine my annoyance when that blooming sergeant, to arouse my sympathy and direct attention to himself, took off his cap and smoothing his hair in a depressed way said he was leaving with a frightful attack of *cafard*. Etienne volunteered instantly that he had shut his up in a box in his knapsack. "Yes," I said, "and I nailed it in." But I feared for the rail-

road trip, and sure enough, the first post card told me that as soon as they were *en route* they set about chasing the *cafard*, which, Etienne explained, must have cut its bonds with his razor and got out. I immediately sent him a parcel of food, and told him that the Etienne I knew in St Valéry would have an *assez grand caractère pour reprendre vite le dessus*, and that the Etienne who had the *cafard* must be a stranger to me. The answer to this letter is: "*J'ai vu les deux Etiennes et c'est celui qui été à Lyon tout près de sa marraine qui a su chasser son cafard.*" While he was here I thanked him again for the large box of ripe almonds that he had sent me on his last furlough, and imagine my surprise last night on finding another two-pound box from his mother. He had written to her to send them.

This kind of life is more expensive than either St Valéry or the Ambulance, as there I paid seven francs a day, and now I average thirteen. I pay none of the car expenses, however. Next week-end we go back to winter time, which means that our days are shortened an hour. We hear rumors that beginning the first of October milk is to be consumed only by children and old people.

One day recently we were to make an early start to visit the farm where the *mutilés* work with their new *apparati*, so as to get used to their artificial hands and arms and learn how to use them. On arriving at the garage I couldn't start the car. I thought if I pushed it down the decline the motor would start, but instead I ar-

rived at the entrance still *en panne*. Another car came around the corner, aiming for the garage, but of course could not pass me. The chauffeur of it I knew in the garage, and as he appeared I signaled to him my trouble. He smiled and drew up by the curb. Fortunately, a second chauffeur came along and primed the car, and I moved off. Later I apologized to the chauffeur I had held up, and he told me there was no need, that "*entre chauffeurs on peut toujours s'entendre. Nos pires ennemis, Mademoiselle, sont les cochers et les conducteurs de taxi—d'ailleurs, vous le savez déjà probablement.*" I told him I was grateful to him for not approaching waving his hands and yelling: "*Sacré nom d'une pipe, qu'est-ce que vous faites dans mon chemin?*" He smiled, and we parted friends.



Hôtel de France  
Mende  
Lozère  
October 19, 1917

I WROTE you that we came down from Le Puy here, making such a noise that my heart was in my mouth and I was wondering whether the whole insides of the car were not going to drop out on the road. Miss B. B., being used to all kinds of noises from a Ford, was entirely unconcerned and gazed placidly about at the passing



scenery. But the ox-teams, herds of sheep, goats and cows that flock the roads now coming down from their summer pasture on the hills, heard us long enough ahead of time to leave the road clear, and in the whole 180 kilometers we didn't use the horn once.

We have been here *en panne* about three weeks. There is less than nothing to do, yet I haven't had a moment to myself. Incidentally, much of our time has been taken up with getting a mosquito netting over a soldier. He is one of the last class called up, and after drilling for a few months he took to spitting blood. They put him in the poorest hospital you can imagine. Not a chair in the wards, not a bed-table, not a back-rest, not a hot-water-bottle. He developed into a "lunger", and had been for two months in the hospital when we appeared. Broth and milk were his diet, and the flies swarmed around him. That was the first thing I noticed, and suggested a mosquito-netting to Miss B. B. It took us a week, although there were fifty in the hospital, but they were supplied by the *Service de Santé* for paludians, and this man wasn't a paludian; and although his illness and his diet made him particularly attractive to flies, they couldn't put up a netting. We interviewed the sergeant in charge, suggesting that we replace the netting used. He was polite, but ineffective. We interviewed the *médecin-chef*, and he was interested and regretted it was none of his *affaire*. We interviewed the *gestionnaire*, whose *affaire* it was, but he couldn't do it without the sanction of

the *Service de Santé*. Finally, one day we went there and found an inspecting colonel, and he did the trick. This is a conspicuous example of the red tape in French administration.

I think I did not tell you that while we were in Lyons we visited the camp of the American Engineers, who are working in the P. L. M. works. The captain, Princeton '10, was in Carleton's company at Plattsburg in 1915. When we arrived half a dozen men of the locomotive engineer class were sitting round the door of the Y. M. C. A. and kitchen *baraque* peeling potatoes and singing American rag-time. Of course I went up and spoke to them and their jaws dropped at hearing the English tongue. Then we went through the work-shops, where the men are repairing locomotives and all kinds of rolling stock, side by side with the Frenchmen. I wear a tiny knot of the stars and stripes in my button-hole and the men who caught sight of it beamed. The captain was very keen to have me see all the men and chat with them, so we left Miss B. B. and the *médecin-chef* of a hospital and his head nurse and saw them all.

I was somewhat startled to find that the head of the Y. M. C. A. in this camp was a Methodist minister who had a year's leave from his church and was putting it in that way. He said it amused him to hear himself encouraging baseball on Sunday and rooting with the loudest fan. It was he also who supplied and distributed the cigarettes.

In the evening some of the actresses of the

Grand Théâtre and the Opéra were giving a concert for the Americans, and we went to it. There was also an Englishman who sang "Tipperary", "There's a Long, Long Trail" and "Keep the Home Fires Burning", the three English marching songs. Of course, as invited guests, we joined in the singing and sat up front. It all ended with the Englishman, one of the actresses and one of the Americans standing on the platform, each with his native flag and singing his own national hymn while the audience stood. The most impressive was the "Marseillaise". The singer put a lot of acting into it, and you could just feel the Germans a few kilometers away bringing ruin and destruction with them. The shivers went up and down my back, and I wanted to get into the thick of it.



Hotel de la Métropole  
Montpellier  
October 25, 1917

BEFORE I forget it I want to tell you an amusing instance of French economy that I noticed today. Miss B. B. and I were in a grocer's shop where she was buying *pâté de foie-gras truffé*, coffee, etc. to send to a civilian Englishman interned since the beginning of the war at Ruhleben. It was a generous three-kilo package and cost her twenty-nine francs. She asked for a

bill, and after the woman had made it out, she said: "*Attendez! je vais la sécher,*" and scooped some sawdust off the floor, ran it over the bill, and then handed it over, blotted. What do you think of that?

I had a letter from "Chicken" (you remember my amusing *blessé* from St Valéry?) last night, in which he told me the days were getting short and cold and he had a frightful *cafard* since coming back from furlough and to distract himself he goes to the theatre almost every night. He says the short cold days, added to the sorrows everybody has had, more or less, during these three years of war, sometimes give him the *dégoût de vivre*. I remember one day at St Valéry he came to me with a long face and asked me to give him some advice, because "*mes amours ne marchent pas.*" I advised time and silence, and a while ago he wrote me that I was a prophet. But this time I talked to him like a Dutch uncle. I told him that his chief trouble was that he had only "Chicken" to think of, and how to amuse him, that he was so much better off than some of his uncomplaining companions he ought to be ashamed; that he had no wife and children who were starving while he was doing his bit unable to help, no vines that were going to ruin without his labor, no trade that was slipping through his fingers, no *fiancée* who was weeping her eyes out because he was wounded, or smiling elsewhere because he was *mutilé*, and that if he was sighing for the *beaux yeux* of some demoiselle, absence would make the heart grow

fonder. Moreover, he should be thankful that he wasn't at the front, spending thirty-five days and nights in the first-line trenches in the high mountains of Alsace, as has just been done by the *petit chasseur*, one of my three musqueteers of St Valéry, Gaillard and *l'artilleur* being the other two. (Incidentally, Gaillard has just had a sixth operation and is still in a hospital, as his wound will not close. Yet he doesn't complain of anything but the lack of tobacco, and I have temporarily eased that difficulty.) "Chicken" wrote me a while ago that the *poilus sont d'ordinaire de braves gens*, but that he was bored to death by their *grossièretés*. I can understand that, for "Chicken" is a child of good family, and if he had not volunteered so young, he would have been an officer.

I have eight *filleuls*, and that's all I can manage. Fortunately, some of them require nothing but letters. One of these is Etienne Bastide, the cheerful, amusing youth who was my *blessé* at St Valéry, who miouwed like a cat and crowed like a baby, and kept my night work active and interesting. While in Paris to take part in the review of the Fourteenth of July he came to see me often. His home is thirty kilometers from here, and I had hoped to see him at this place, but all furloughs are suspended. He told us in Lyons, when he ate with us—his napkin tucked into his collar, his *képi* on his head, because his hair was cut short as per army regulations, making him look like a prisoner—that his battalion was in the sector of Malmaison, a strongly forti-

fied place the French want to retake, but he feared the casualties, because the French were so near the fort it would be difficult to reduce it by artillery fire. Now I see by the *communiqués* of October 23 and 24 that the fort has been taken, and also three villages beyond the objective, eight thousand prisoners, two regiments of which are the redoubted and long-tried 13th Prussian, which had been told to hang on at any cost, also three staffs with their commanding colonels, and seventy cannon.

Another *filleul* who was a *cavalier* near Salonika employed at the camp for horses, has come back to Paris for a month's furlough, after nine months in the Orient. Soldiers on the French front get seven days furlough every four months. His has been pretty dreary, as he has suffered from paludism all the time, and is now being treated at Val-de-Grâce. He has entered the school for officers at St Cyr, and will probably be there all winter.



Montpellier  
October 25, 1917

I'VE had a real sorrow since I've been here. Do you remember my telling you of a man at St Valéry who came in one of the last convoys while I was on night duty and who had on his bed-table a very handsome briquet, one side of



which was a medallion of the French cock standing on the German eagle and crowing triumphantly, and the other side was some repoussé branches of laurel?—That I had commented on its beauty and he had offered it to me, saying: “*Mademoiselle, si ce petit objet peut vous être aucunement utile je vous l’offre de bon coeur*”, so that I ended by accepting it? I didn’t even know his name, but somehow he got my name and address and wrote to me on his return to the front. Thinking he was somebody else I wrote back, but finally another *blessé* told me who he was. He wrote to me again, and then I didn’t hear from him. When I was having three other men traced at the *Mairie de Lyon* I thought of this boy. Since I’ve been here one of my letters to him from Lyon and a post-card from Paris have been sent back marked: “*Le Destinataire n’a pu être atteint*”. I greatly fear that’s a gentle way of telling me that he has remained for good on the battlefield. If this is so I am happy to say that as yet he is the first of my men who, so far as I know, has gone back to the front to be killed. Of course, a great many of them are “reformed” or still in hospitals, but also a large number are not.

Just now I am worrying over a first floor man at St Valéry whom I had only while on night duty. Perhaps you remember my speaking of a delicate youth with large brown eyes and wrists and arms like a woman’s? He used to write to me constantly and when his convalescence was over and he started back to the front he sent me

"*un gros baiser de votre petit blessé dévoué*". That was the last card I've had from him and that was a long time ago. He was engaged to a nice girl who came with his mother to see him at St Valéry. I think I'll get the *Mairie de Lyon* on his trail.

And do you remember another first floor man, the handsome boy with large blue eyes, and beautiful white teeth, so rare among the soldiers, and a tooth-brush moustache, who was an electrician by trade and had been hit in the head so that a large square of bone was exposed right at the back of the neck? Lamarcq was his name. He's the one who when he rejoined his *dépôt* said that sometimes his head hurt him and sometimes it didn't, so they let him go his way undisturbed and he was earning 6 fr. a day in a glass factory. Well, he was caught poaching, given 8 days prison and then transferred to another regiment with the *dépôt* at Lyons. He wrote me an amusing letter about it, telling me that he had moved to the *Hôtel Virgil*, where the food was plain but strictly temperance, that the rooms were clean and bare, just a bed and table, and the distractions were sweeping and weeding the gravel walk. I must guess it was a prison, he said, and that he had been put in for setting a trap for rabbits, but that the owner of the ground where he had done it had refused to prosecute, otherwise it would have meant a court-martial.

As long as I'm writing at such length about my men, I'll mention one more, Rouvière, also an ex-St Valéryite. He's the one whose opera-

tion I watched the morning after I began my night duty, when Dr Fitch probed his back to remove a bullet and couldn't find it. He became my chief worker and one day, to repeated inquiries and the intense amusement of the whole ward, he explained at great length that in his patois, "*agatche, ca veut dire regarde.*" Well, he has written to me twice urging me to go and see his "*petite famille qui vous attends avec impatience, car il leur tarde de vous connaître et moi personnellement cela me fera un grand plaisir.*" I'm always getting similar requests. Etienne wants me to go out and see his family, and his mother has also urged it, but as I can't go in the car and as the train would saddle me upon them for four hours at lunch time I think it would be an imposition. Doubtless they would be polite enough to tell me I was doing them an honor, as *l'artilleur* did when I spent a day with him and his family at Fleurie and they "cracked" three bottles of wine in my honor.

Ernest wants me to be sure and see his mother who has been for many years in a hospital in Marseilles. He's the boy who is orderly for the American Officers' mess at Lyons and to whom I sent the books to study English. "Chicken" wants me to stop with his family in their chateau and Henri Predalle, Lamarcq, and others stationed near Paris are planning to descend upon it like an avalanche at my return. But then I give them all brief but plain talks for plain people, so they get a bit of salty seasoning with my fooling and interest in their affairs.

Montpellier  
October 27, 1917

Dear Mother :

OF course, you know that Montpellier is the land of the sunny south, where palms and bamboo grow in the gardens, where the white roads are lined with rows of large plane-trees, where the country is dotted with olive, fig and almond trees. Just now the hills are a flaming copper from the vines which have turned yellow and red.

The bathing resort of Montpellier is Palavas, 11 kilometers distant on the Mediterranean. It's a funny little white town on the salt marshes, and its one hotel is now a hospital for tubercular patients under care of English nurses. The men aren't "lungers", but have tubercular joints and wounds that won't heal. Only about five a year out of 150 get well, and they are either "reformed" or returned to the auxiliary service. The others are kept until they die, as they can't be discharged unless healed. The treatment is open air and sun, and every morning all the men are put on the porch, their bandages undone and the wounds exposed to the sun. The cold winter carries many men away with it, but there are several who have been in bed ever since the hospital began, eighteen months ago. For a good hotel at the bathing resort of Montpellier, the principal town of the Hérault, it is a gloomy place, with narrow stairs and dark halls; but it is a pleasure to see English sanitary measures

and cleanliness in force, for you know the French have no trained nurses, except those who have evolved during these three years of war. Formerly the best nurses were the Sisters of St Vincent de Paul, the nursing order, with their tight fitting blue waists and well pressed accordion-pleated skirts and huge white-winged, stiffly-starched caps. It seems that every sister has her own dress, blessed at the time she enters the order and worn constantly till it falls apart, but she wears any coif that comes to hand.

I've had a most interesting day. We were to go to Lunel to see two hospitals and an annex. We had arranged it ahead of time, as Tuesdays Montpellier is crowded with the wine-merchants who come in from all sides to dispose of their wine. The hotel is so full at noon that the three dining-rooms are thrown open and it's difficult to get served. You really wonder where the people who appear get the 5 francs necessary to pay for the meal, and you hear the patois, which sounds like Italian. One word for instance. A letter is *una littura*. Also, all the words ending in "n" have a "g" added, with an upward song. *Bien* becomes *bieng*; *bon*, *bong*; and the final "e" is pronounced: *ma filla* for *ma fille*; *moment*, *momang* and the "r" is rolled. To me it's extremely pretty. Etienne does it somewhat, and his mother even more, and this, added to her lack of teeth, makes her conversation somewhat incomprehensible but very amusing. She really is a dear, and I'm hoping daily for a letter from Etienne so as to relieve her mind. I wrote you

that he was in the sector of Malmaison, where the French have recently advanced so brilliantly. But all this isn't getting on with my story.

I wrote you also that Rouvière wanted me to look up his family if I went to Lunel, so I notified Madame, not knowing whether it would be his wife or mother, of my anticipated approach. It's a good flat road lined with plane-trees and on either side as far as the eye can see are vineyards, now either turned red and gold, or already plowed and stripped of leaves for next spring. (One wealthy *médecin-chef* feeds his farm horses entirely on the grape-skins and leavings after the grapes are pressed, and the leaves plucked from the vines; the horses are glorious animals.) Every now and then one sees olive trees and cypresses.

Lunel is 23 kilometers from Montpellier; we had to "do" the *hôpital mixte*, which means that a permanent civil institution, either hospital or hospice (old men and women's home) has taken in some soldiers during the war, and the Hôtel Brignac. Thinking the hôtel would have the *médecin-chef* we went to it first. It used to be a superb private house of the Brignac family. You enter a house with a large winding stair, and 10 feet beyond is a door leading to a courtyard around which the house is built. The courtyard is very large having about five rows of huge trees. A beautiful carved stone fountain is at the other end from the entrance, and above stands St Joseph in the wall of the house. We found the bureau, asked for the *médecin-chef* or



*gestionnaire* and found there was neither, only *infirmiers*, as the hospital hadn't had a *malade* or *blessé* in it since June. That done we went to the Hôpital Mixte. Thinking Miss B. B. would be there at least half an hour, I looked up the rue Malantière, where Rouvière had his *petite famille*, and drew up at No. 14. Some men were looking in an open barn door, which I thought must be No. 18, the number I was after, so I asked for Madame Rouvière.—“*Madame Rouvière l'épicière?*”—I didn't know whether she was an *épicière* or not, but took a chance, walked along a few feet and saw a small grocery, with vines growing over the house and plants in boxes at the windows. I opened the door, and as I walked in hit with my head a string of dried onions hanging from the ceiling. Everything was in order and spotlessly clean, both rare in the Midi. A customer was having some wine poured into a large flat bulging green bottle. All kinds of canned goods, sardines, *truffles*, *pâtés*, were stacked in neat rows. A little woman with large brown eyes stepped up. She had been waiting behind the counter and was clad in a blue apron-dress. I asked for Madame Rouvière, and thrust out my hand explaining who I was. She beamed broadly, called her mother, a toothless old dame clad in black with a helmet-like black bonnet, to wait on the customer, drew a curtain and asked me to follow her up a flight of stone steps. She explained that as she hadn't expected me till after lunch (as I had written), she had sent her daughter off to work, and she

was re-reading her husband's letters "to get a line on me." Not knowing "*avec qui j'avais à faire*," she had written to know whether in talking with me she had to wear her society manner "*et chercher un peu mes phrases. Et il m'a répondu, elle est très gentille, tu peux parler librement avec elle et elle n'est surtout pas fière*". See, he recognized the Hibernian in me, but it pleased me immensely. By this time we were sitting in straight-backed, rush-bottomed chairs, in a spotlessly clean room. A huge side-board occupied one side, and in the middle stood a table with a china tea-set with four cups turned upside down. There were white and blue flowers painted on it. Beyond were two windows with white curtains, a sewing-machine and a baby-carriage. She begged me to let her offer me a *petit verre* of some thing, but I refused, as I didn't want to put her to any expense. Besides, we were to lunch shortly. Then she wanted me to stay to lunch, and I should have accepted gladly but for Miss B. B. Miss B. B., incidentally, has been a brick in this way, not scorning to eat with my *filleuls*, Ernest Blanc (American Officers' mess) and Etienne, when they were in Lyons, but I didn't think Madame would want her, or that she, Miss B. B., would care to take the time, so I refused. We chatted of Rouvière, the husband, who I find to my surprise is 40. Also, she asked my opinion of the doctor's treatment for the daughter; cod-liver oil, and every morning very hot water, then luke-warm in the middle of the back, and on top of that a camphor

oil rub. The daughter is 17 and suffers from nose-bleed. She's a delicate looking girl of apparently 15. Of course, knowing nothing about it, I backed the doctor. Personally, I should think cold water would be better to stimulate circulation. We talked of Rouvière's operation, which I had watched, of the life at St Valéry, of the way he had helped me mornings when I was on night duty, folding covers, emptying ash-trays etc., and she said his comment on it had been: "*Je le fais parcequ'elle est si gentille pour nous et parceque je sais que ça lui fait plaisir*". She showed me a large photograph of him, larger than this sheet of paper, framed in oak and hanging near the ceiling in a bed-room. The bed was almost swamped by a great puff with a white cover, and on the mantelpiece stood a huge ornament with a red velvet heart and some inscription in gilt letters, of which I saw only the word *souvenir*. This was under glass. An immense *armoire* and a chair completed the furnishing. Nothing was lying around, although I caught a glimpse of some clothes hanging behind the door; hence I know the room was occupied.

As the moment of my departure was approaching and the daughter hadn't come home and Madame wanted me to see her, we went down-stairs. She gave me a little parcel, as I had taken nothing to drink and she couldn't let me go away empty-handed. We both got into the car, she still in her blue apron and hatless, which was a matter of indifference to me. As

we came into the square where the hospital is and also the millinery establishment where the daughter works, I saw Miss B. B. standing in the sun in the middle and gazing in all directions. However, I calmly shut off the motor and dived after Madame into the hat-shop. We found the daughter, the exact image of her father, and then I backed down the hall making my adieux, as I knew Miss B. B. would be impatient. When I got outside I found the car surrounded by small boys in black aprons and Miss B. B. in the offing. She came up and I introduced her. Madame had been repeating how much she regretted not keeping me for the afternoon, but I promised to come back after the war.

You'd love this part of France. It's warm with a perpetual blue cloudless sky. Palms, bamboo and even orange-trees are to be seen in all the gardens. My men would think it the honor of their lives to meet you and you'd love them. You know an *infirmière* is a sacred object to the wives and mothers of the men she has cared for; friends and relations gather from miles to see "*l'infirmière qui a soigné Philibert*", or whatever his name is. Madame Bastide wrote me (her spelling): "*Quand je pense que c'est vous, que vous m'avez remplacé aux près de mon Fils, sa me semble que jamais je ne vous rendrait ce que vous avez fait pour notre Etienne*". If I stay in France she has asked me to come to Aniane for Christmas. It was my secret sorrow that I should leave this part of the

country without going to Aniane, but now we are staying on till Monday, and Sunday we do nothing, so I'm going out then.

If we (you and I) came we could have a glorious time, moving from farmer to grocer, etc., and finally ending at Chicken's *château*. Incidentally, I got five sheets from him today in answer to my Dutch Uncle letter. It begins this way: "*Merci, merci mille fois de votre si bonne lettre reçue hier. Elle m'a fait un extrême plaisir et m'a en même temps fait beaucoup de bien. Vous êtes bien l'amie sur laquelle on peut compter toujours.*" Billy Sunday would say that I cast my bread upon the waters and that "Chicken" had spread it with butter and jam and given it back. Personally I think it shows mighty fine character in the boy to take my abuse that way. But then all these men are fine, with very few exceptions, and that's the real joy in the unpleasantness of nursing. There's another older man at Neuilly who to this day writes that I saved his leg for him. It's not true, but being his auxiliary I was constantly working round him, and as he'd shut his eyes and turn away when his dressing was being done, he couldn't see it.

After I left Madame Rouvière we lunched—pumpkin soup, *ragoût*, roast chicken, delicious grapes, boiled chestnuts, *vin y compris*, for four francs. Then, as we had the time and were more than half-way there, we went on to Aigues-mortes. We drove all around the ramparts. The town is on salt marshes at the juncture of



the canals to Beaucaire and Cette. The ramparts are perfect, just as St Louis built them before starting on the eighth Crusade. The highest tower, *La Tour de Constance*, we climbed and saw where the knights lodged and where the Protestants were later imprisoned. The roof of the room is charming ogive, with high slender pillars coming to a point in the center. Each has a different lovely capital—either a branch of olives, or oak leaves, or some other delicate carving. From the top we looked at the Mediterranean in the distance, the five-sided town encircled by walls at our feet and on the horizon the Cevennes. Also, the still, straight, blue canal bordered by plane-trees. Unfortunately, the town has been destroyed, for it was the haunt of the *va-nu-pieds* who pillaged the south of France on the plea that they were gathering to go to the rescue of St Louis, then a captive among the Turks. The outside of the church, however, is old and looks Saracenesque, but the inside is restored.

When we had finished our tour and were sitting in the car outside the ramparts, we opened Madame Rouvière's little package and found a delicious fresh-baked fruit cake. She had told me her husband had a birthday on the 4th and she was baking him a cake. This must have been the brother. We've just finished it at tea.

Today is the 31st, and I've spent all day oiling, greasing and even washing the car, and repairing the tubes in preparation for Cette tomorrow. We have five hospitals to see there and two on



the way back, at Balaruc and Pignau. We hope to be at home here Friday night. That means some tall hustling tomorrow.



Montpellier  
October 31, 1917

Dear Mother :

I'VE just reread and sealed another "volume" to you, and although I've mentioned Madame Bastide, Etienne's mother, I notice that I haven't told you I saw her. As I couldn't go to Aniane (I hope to go next Sunday) and she was coming to Montpellier last Sunday, October 28, I asked her to come here between eleven and twelve, thinking that we could lunch together, here or elsewhere. I asked the boy to show her up when she came, and about 11:30 as I was sitting in the sun, mending, there came a knock at the door. The valet's voice: "*Une dame*"—then a pause. I jumped up and ran to the door. In came a figure all dressed in black, with a becoming crepe hat and a trailing skirt. A pink cheeked, green-eyed, black-haired woman, apparently of about forty-five—later she told me she was over sixty. I urged her to sit in my red plush arm-chair, and she did so—on the edge. Of course she began about my being Etienne's *infirmière*, etc., then a sigh, and *pauvre garçon!* which I checked immediately, for I firmly believe that

these devoted women kill their sons by constant apprehension. Absolute conviction that nothing will happen is hard, but it's the surest way to have nothing happen. This sounds like folly, but I'm convinced it's truth. I explained my theory to Madame, she assented, and began a string of amusing anecdotes about Etienne and her granddaughter, the child of Etienne's brother, a *coiffeur*, who died before the war. They wanted to keep the store for Etienne, but he would have none of it. She talked with the local accent, somewhat Italianesque. She has one upper eye-tooth and two teeth down below. They look like a stalactite and stalagmites! She's a dear and always looks on the bright side. It's evidently from her that Etienne gets his disposition. All the time I might have thought he was talking. Her exclamation is "*Pardi!*"; "*té*" takes the place of "*tiens*"; and "*eh bé*" for "*eh bien*". She pronounces the final e, rolls her r's and adds g after n. About twelve I suggested that we lunch, but she was afraid she'd *déranger* me, and her nephew was downstairs and she could eat with him. I suggested we all eat together and that she could take me where she would, and finally carried the day. Going out she started down the *escalier de service* but I dragged her back down the main stairs. Down below we found a man of about 35, stout, two days' beard, one mobile brown eye and one fixed brown eye, which replaces the one he left in Castres after an explosion in the munitions factory where he worked. Now here, I

think, is an injustice. That man was doing his bit just as much as the soldier at the front, yet because it was not at the front that he lost his eye he gets no pension, no decoration, and cannot be "reformed." A man who leaves an eye or an arm or a leg at the front receives the *médaille militaire* and the *croix de guerre avec palme*, as a natural consequence, and the pension which goes with the *médaille militaire*. The munitions-factory man should at least receive some pension for the loss of his member, as he wasn't there for his health but because the country sent him.

We strolled down behind the *Comédie*, which is the landmark and center of Montpellier, to a small hotel, and took a table at the back. The maid asked if we'd have the 2.50 lunch, which was *maigre* (no meat) or the 4 fr. lunch. As it was my party and Sunday I said the 4 fr. I sat between them, saw that Madame was helped first, poured the wine (*compris*) and did the honors. She did most of the talking, always humorous and good-natured. I asked which was the glass-eye when the owner told me he had one, inquired into the mission on which he had just been sent to take some Anamite *infirmiers* to Cette,—as they couldn't speak French they needed a chaperon,—and asked what he did at the *caserne* where he is stationed.

After lunch was over we started for a walk. I hadn't seen much of the town, although we'd been here a week, and they showed me the beautiful modern Greek-style *préfecture*, the *arc de*

*triomphe* erected by Louis XIV leading into the Peyrou, a huge esplanade built under the same monarch, with a bronze equestrian statue of himself in the middle and a lovely water-tower on an eminence at the end.

Madame wanted me to see the sister of a neighbor who is at school, and asked me to go with her. The nephew accompanied us to the garden gate and then dashed home to tell his wife that he had returned from Cette and to explain why he had not shown up for lunch. We strolled through the huge garden of what was once a convent but has now been taken over by the civil authorities, and steered for the church. Our eyes once accustomed to the darkness, we saw about fifty girls chanting the benediction. Madame went up to the iron grating, thinking if she saw the maiden in question, the latter would rise and come to us. She did not see her, so we came out and went to the convent. A teacher told us the girl would come but that we must not detain her, and we went into the parlor. Then Madame told me that I was the object of the visit. As I could not go to Aniane, Madame's neighbor had begged Madame to show me to her sister. Before I could escape by one door, the other door opened and a girl of about fifteen, dressed in black, with large brown eyes standing out of a pale face and with one artificially curled lock drooping over her forehead and with her hair braided tightly back, came to meet us. After a *Bon jour!* to Madame and a kiss on either cheek, she turned to me and put out her

hand, saying: "*Alors, Mademoiselle, vous êtes la marraine d'Etienne? Enchantée de faire votre connaissance. Avez-vous de ses nouvelles?*" In introducing me Madame had only said: "*Voilà la Mees!*" I didn't realize that being Etienne's *marraine* was a claim to glory, but here you see it. Madame told me that when she got back everyone who was not at the station to meet her would come to the house with the words: "*Et la Mees? Vous l'avez vue? Comment est-elle?*" Funny, isn't it?

We didn't stay long, but Henriette had a sore trial, for she wanted to look at the *cogs* on my uniform and hear what I had to say about Etienne, and Madame had much to say. For the moment at all events her cup of happiness is complete, for she is one of only two living Anianites who have seen and spoken to *la Mees*. Etienne always calls me *Mees*, although when he writes it he spells it *Miss*.

The nephew joined us at the aqueduct, and asked me to go for coffee at his house. But I was cold and was wondering what Miss B. B. would say to my long absence, and, besides, Madame had to catch the five o'clock train and make some purchases beforehand, so we all strolled toward the hotel and I left them. Before we re-joined the nephew I was saying I might go home for Christmas, as the prospect of another Christmas alone in a hotel in Paris was not alluring. If I had friends to go to, I said, it would be different. In response, Madame said she'd love to have me come to Aniane. It was not rich, she

explained, but it was *de bon coeur*. And if she could not take me in she had neighbors who had men at the front and they would be delighted to give me a room. It would be *comme chez elle*, she declared, and she would be so *contente* to have me, etc. She wanted to take me back then to spend the night, but I had visions of Miss B. B. and did not go. I think Christmas at Aniane would be great fun and a unique experience. If Etienne came, although there isn't a chance that he'll be on furlough then, as all furloughs are suspended owing to the attack, it would be very jolly, as he and his mother are so amusing. I haven't seen the father yet, but hope to on Sunday.

Madame was taking home with great pride and secrecy a kilo of sugar which she had managed somehow to secure. Here at the hotel three pieces are brought up for our morning coffee, and as I take only two, I put the other in a paper bag in which there are many others that I have collected *en route* against a rainy day. I think I'll take them out to Madame Bastide, as she apparently sets great store by her cup of coffee and usually has many neighbors to share it with. It's always served to me in sufficient quantity, so I don't need this bagful.

I've just heard a bugle go by, and as I don't know whether that is an alarm for Zeppelins or not (some came into this neighborhood about a week ago), I've drawn the heavy curtains over the window. The blinds are shut and my win-



dow is on a garden. Now I hear a steam-whistle. Maybe it's only a train.

Today after I had washed the car and was mending the tubes, the old mechanic in the garage said: "*Nos femmes ne feraient pas ça, ni ça non plus*" (pointing to the car). "No," I said, "and because they won't, we strangers have to come and do it." He shrugged his shoulders, and releasing his lower lip with a hissing noise replied: "*Elles ne font rien que*"—and went through the gestures of painting, powdering and "dolling up." Then he told me I had earned my dinner, had "*tres bien fait le travail d'un homme.*"



Montpellier  
November 2, 1917

ETIENNE has been killed! It's too cruel! That cheerful, happy nature always gay, always doing something amusing, cheering everybody and keeping everybody in good spirits. Think of his poor mother! I have a letter from her tonight. She did not then know. I know because when I got back from Cette I found my letter to him returned, and written on the envelope in pencil: "*Tué à l'ennemi.*" Of all my men he was my favorite, and now he is gone. Oh, this terrible war!

What a happy care-free kid he was that day at Lyons when I saw him last, dressed in khaki, with a red fez, and wearing his *croix de guerre* with two stars, sitting on the wall outside the hospital for Arabs while Miss B. B. went in, and he and I stayed outside. It used to be the palace of the Archbishop, and is on an eminence overlooking Lyons. There he told me that the song everyone was singing while he was on furlough down here was "*Tout le long de la Tamise*" (All along the Thames), and he sang it to me with his funny southern accent. I have also another song he was always singing at St Valéry, "*Ferme tes jolis Yeux.*" And now he'll never sing again! He may be lying out in the wet and snow. Cut off at 24 years! He had been through three years at the front, with only the slight wound that brought him to St Valéry. Why did we cure him to send him back and get one more citation and now this? I don't dare write to his mother, for she may not know yet—the French are so slow about notifying the families of men who have fallen. He would not accept the stripes of a corporal or sergeant because he said without them he could take care of himself better; they had been offered to him many times. He would have been on furlough now, if they had not begun that attack of Malmaison fort. Poor Madame Bastide! I wonder how it happened, whether he was shot and died instantly, or whether he fell in the attack and died after long hours in No Man's Land, or whether he was blown to bits by a shell.

He boasted that he'd never brushed his teeth, and he tucked his napkin into his collar, and mopped his plate with his bread, but his nature was one in a million, and I was proud that he never said nor did an unkind word or act. I suppose everyone wonders why his son or husband or friend is picked off; but so many are not worth while keeping, whereas this boy brightened the life of everyone with whom he came in contact.

Never for one instant did Etienne take a liberty or presume upon the fact that he was a soldier and could for that reason expect more than a civilian. He was always modest, a bit diffident, and constantly afraid of "déranging" me when he came to see me on furlough. Sometimes men in the English army are reported "missing, believed killed", and a later report shows them alive. If this could only be the case with him!

He did look so funny that last time in Lyons, with his hair cut short like a convict's. He'd done it purposely because his lieutenant would not give him the furlough which was his by right and which he wanted in order to help his parents with the *vendange*. Consequently, he had to go to the commander, and knowing the army regulation about the length of hair, had his cut before seeing him so as not to be refused on that account. So he kept his *chéchia*—his red fez—on during lunch.

I am to go to Aniane Sunday to see his mother! That will be hard. If she doesn't know, I shall have to break the news to her.

Grand Hôtel Mas  
Lamalou-les-Bains  
(Hérault)  
November 7, 1917

WE have come all of seventy kilometers to-day. I got up early to see the Lodève Cathedral before leaving, because, although we arrived there yesterday at 7:30 in the evening, it was already dark. The churches are still draped in black with silver fringes, and in the middle aisle before the altar is a coffin surrounded by candles. It is, of course, the remains of All Souls' Day celebration, but it fits my mood. To me the Hérault meant Etienne. I'd never heard of it until at St Valéry he told me he came from there, and I looked it up on the map. Three years at the front with one slight wound, and then to be killed by a short-range French shell before the attack had begun! His remains have been buried in a cemetery near Vailly, and his parents want me to get them and bring them to Aniane. But of course that's impossible, as Vailly is in the war zone, and a body may not be moved until after the war. They seemed to think I could manage it in some way.

Now that I am beginning to get some perspective on my sad visit to Aniane Sunday, certain things crop up that were funny. There was no one to meet me at the station, so I walked toward the town situated on the side of a vine-covered hill with a fine churchtower rising above the other drab-colored buildings. At the fork I

asked for Madame Bastide's house, and received the reply: "*Qui cela? Celle auquel [à laquelle] le fils est mort?*" Then a small boy led me—or rather, I led him, because he was so busy eyeing the folds of my skirt and discussing with his pals the *Oeuvre Anglaise* on my arm that I outdistanced them and had to wait at the street corners till he caught up. We went along a wide boulevard and finally he turned into a dirty cobble-stoned street and stopped in front of a dark narrow stair, saying: "*C'est là!*" I went up, pushed open a door, and found myself in a dark room, with drawn blinds and several people in black, sobbing. The person who met me at the door turned out to be the widow of Etienne's brother, a coiffeur who died at the age of thirty. Madame came forward, and weeping on my shoulder, said she had been so afraid I would not come, as my telegram had said nothing about it. (Before knowing of Etienne's death I had written that I would come Sunday, and when she wrote me the sad news, I had telegraphed: "*Plus profondes sympathies.*") The others present were Madame's sister from Lodève and Monsieur Bastide, swathed in a muffler tucked into his waistcoat and with several days' beard. He was toasting his feet on a foot-warmer and crying as though his heart would break. Poor old man! He has now nothing to live for, no object in improving the vines, and his only prospect is to work on until the end of his days; whereas Etienne had vowed that he would take care of his parents and that

they should not lift a finger. He would have kept his word, even if he had married and had a large family. The poor parents have suffered an unusually great loss, because he was such a dependable son, absolutely devoted and always amusing.

Of course the first thing was for me to read the letter written by a *camarade* telling the facts. Etienne was killed by a shell-explosion at 5 P. M. on the 23d of October. As the attack did not begin until seven o'clock it must have been from a short-range French shell. Three days later, when the *camarade* was relieved at the fort of Malmaison, he went back to see what had become of the remains, and found they had been buried near Vailly. He will try to go again and take a picture of the grave. The letter contained a very just estimate of Etienne's character and called him *votre vénérable fils*.

During this talk Madame's sister and daughter-in-law had retired to the kitchen and got luncheon ready. At table I am served first, then Madame, then the grand-daughter, who *veut* wine, *veut* more soup, puts her elbows on the table, and constantly tries to attract attention to herself. The mother says: "*Tiens-toi comme il faut*," but the kid doesn't hear. When she says: "*Je veux de vin*," I remonstrate that one usually doesn't *veux*, but *voudrais*, and that at her age I didn't *veux*. Madame expresses silent gratitude, saying that *l'oncle* (Etienne) used to keep the kid in order, was very strict with her. But I size it up this way. Madame is



the strong personality, her daughter-in-law hasn't a chance when she is about, and Madame spoils the kid, as it's all she has, and the kid is most of the time with her.

Monsieur opened a bottle of *vieux* red wine for me. *Vieux* means about seven years old, as usually they drink the wine the year it's made. The *vieux* was very good. At the end of the meal he opened another bottle of "sweet white," which they assured me had no alcohol, was pure *jus de raisin*. Before we had finished the olives and the almonds, the procession began to arrive. These people, mostly women, and all in black, would come in, kiss each member of the family on both cheeks, and then take a chair near Madame and begin to sigh. Then they ask how it happened, read the *camarade's* letter, shed tears, sit in silence and then leave. Of course they were always told that I was the "*infirmière qui a soigné Etienne à St Valéry*," and then Madame would cry that she would rather have had him die there, because then she would know where he was, and now he probably didn't have even a coffin. Meanwhile the visitor would have shaken hands with me, saying: "*Enchantée de faire votre connaissance, mais c'est malheureux que ce soit par de si tristes circonstances*." I'd reply in kind and tell them about Etienne at St Valéry.

From half past one to half past seven the procession continued. When the last chair was occupied the first-comer had to go to make room for the next mourner. I gave up my chair early and went into the kitchen to talk with the aunt and

daughter-in-law, because they told me of Etienne and wanted to hear of him at St Valéry. Finally Jeanne came, the sister of the girl I had seen in Montpellier who had greeted me with "*Alors, Mademoiselle, c'est vous la marraine d'Etienne?*" and with her Madame Prieur, a well-dressed woman in a crepe hat, and mother of Etienne's best friend, Paul. They came into the kitchen and suggested that I spend the night. I had brought a comb and toothbrush on the possibility, but I demurred. They thought it would please Madame immensely, as she had hoped that I would come, and also she could talk with me in the evening after the procession stopped. I could sleep in the house of either of them, they both would be delighted to have me. Finally I consented. As that was arranged and the chairs were all occupied, Jeanne suggested we take a walk.

First she took me to her house, and we found the father nursing his toe in front of a huge fireplace with a red cotton curtain hanging as a flounce from the mantelpiece. A small fire was burning. We went into the parlor, the plaster walls of which were all painted with palms and rocking boats. There was there a fine grandfather clock. The wood was maple inlaid, and the face and pendulum were repousséd with brass flowers painted in red and blue. They gave me some quince jam, offered something to drink, which I refused, and then Jeanne and I went out. She told me that she had begged Etienne to bring his *marraine*, and he had promised to do

so—“*Et si tu ne t'entends pas avec elle tu ne t'entendras jamais avec personne, elle est si gentille et elle a un caractère épatant.*” Probably that was mostly concocted at the moment, but I think Etienne may have mildly expressed the idea. She told me also that one day she had found him packing a box of almonds, putting them in neat rows, all the points going in the same direction, and she had jollied him about his pains, and he had replied that it was for his *marraine*, who was worth taking trouble for. Perhaps another concoction of hers, but the fact remains that the almonds did all point the same way, and as he addressed the box he probably also packed it. She told me how carefully he had taught her and her sister to ride a bicycle, how one Sunday on furlough, instead of going to see some maiden (but he never did that) he made a kite with an enormous tail for the small boys and flew it for them. She took me to an unfinished chapel, a favorite walk of the youth and flower of the town and which I was to have seen under happier circumstances. Then she took me to the ancient cathedral and to the chapel of Notre Dame the miracle-worker. About 1870 the town was plague-ridden. As many as fourteen people died in a day from typhoid. Someone in despair suggested that they get out the statue of the Virgin and carry it in a procession about the town, and from the moment of its appearance the deaths ceased and the sick got well.

Afterwards we went to see Madame Prieur, who had urged us to come; also we had to decide

in which house I should sleep. I was all for Jeanne, but we didn't want to hurt Madame Prieur's feelings. In speaking of my coming she said that someone had wondered whether I would condescend to sleep in their house and whether I could put up with the lack of *luxe*. "*Mais,*" j'ai répondu, "*Plus on est grand plus on est simple.*" Don't you love that applied to me? We arranged that I should sleep at Jeanne's, and went back to the Bastide household.

The crowd was thinning, the *curé* was there, and Madame looked used up. She said she was "*éreinée*" and didn't know how she'd stand another week of it, as it had been going on for two days and would surely last another week at least. Yet she told me, not exactly with pride but with sorrowful emphasis, that the crowd didn't go to every house in such numbers. Nor did I doubt it. A new arrival had come, a young widow of about thirty whom Madame had nursed and kept for five years when her own daughter had died at the age of nine months. She's a dress-maker by profession and was well clad. She's efficient, took charge at table, put the small child in her place, insisted on Madame's eating and gave cheerful sympathy. About 9:30 the small child fell asleep on the table over a cup of black coffee, and I went to Jeanne's to bed. In this house there is electricity in all the rooms with wall switches. Jeanne put a tripod over the fire and heated some water which she gave me in a water-can. In my room I found a clean night-gown with a blue ribbon, a clean comb,

shoe-horn and a fresh piece of soap. They keep no servant. She and her father live alone. His business is making tartar, such as one puts into biscuits, and which goes into chemicals. It is made from the remains of the grapes after they have been pressed.

Jeanne woke me at six, throwing her hands up in horror at my open window and saying she'd be afraid the rats would come in. She cleaned my shoes and gave me a huge bowl of coffee and milk and then accompanied me to the station. First, however, we went to say good-bye to Madame, who gave me a fine picture of Etienne and another huge bag of almonds. She begged me to come again, and I swore that after the war I'd come with you. So don't forget you have a date and they'll all die happy if they see you.

Madame Prieur came in on the same train, "*avec une de mes clientes.*" She is a *sage-femme de premier ordre*. This *cliente* was coming in to have the last of seventeen teeth extracted, and as she had once had a hemorrhage she brought Madame Prieur along. We had coffee at a café near the station, and the *cliente* paid, being almost insulted when I opened my purse. Then we took the tram back to my hotel, and Madame P. paid, also almost insulted. So you see, from first to last they treated me as an honored guest, and the only drawback was the circumstance that took me there.

On my return I spent the afternoon washing the car and getting it into condition to leave the

next day. After lunch we started. We stopped at St André de Sargonis, where there is a small convalescent hospital and where we found the men out working and the two doctors, who were civilians, on their rounds. We pushed on to Lodève, fifty-eight kilometers from Montpellier, and had visited the hospital and returned to the hotel by 4:30. Madame Bastide's sister had told me that the Hôtel du Nord was *le plus riche*, but though they gave us an excellent dinner we had only a candle in our rooms, as the gas is limited to the hall and salon. My bill was nine francs for dinner, room and breakfast. This is a lovely spot, with warm, soft air. The men take the baths and drink the waters. Most of them have rheumatism or paralyzed muscles, and the baths eventually help to restore the use of the muscles.



Narbonne  
November 15, 1918

WE have found here more Serbians who were prisoners among the Austrians and inoculated by them with tuberculosis. In Béziers there were thirty-six of them. The innoculation is in the neck, under the right ear. Its effect is to redden the skin, then a sore breaks open, emitting pus. It is called an *abcès froid*. Once in a blue moon it heals, but usually it takes in all the ganglia along the arm-pit and is one series of unhealable



open sores. The men in Béziers could tell nothing of themselves—did not speak enough French—but the doctor was amazed at the similarity of the wounds, and investigation showed inoculation. If it gets to the bones they just rot away.



Perpignan  
November 18, 1917

THE pieces of paper money here are interesting. In Montpellier there was not enough small money in circulation, so a store issued some five, ten and twenty-five centimes pieces, and they are good here. In other places tram tickets and stamps are the small coin. The chamber of commerce of almost every town has issued this paper money, but what's good in one town won't go in the next. Here they refuse to accept certain Narbonne notes, but think that Carcassonne will take them, because it is in the same department as Narbonne. Narbonne stores would not accept Béziers paper, but a hotel will usually accept anything from a nearby town. Of course this paper ought to have national recognition.

Four weeks have gone by, and Madame Bastide has as yet had no official notice of Etienne's death. I am wondering if there can be a chance that he is still alive. I think the joy would kill his parents. Poor madame! She wants me to come back to see her and asks me to remain in France forever.

Lyons  
December 2, 1917

TWO of my former St Valéry men are here in Lyons, and as they had on several occasions expressed a wish to see me again, I wrote and asked them to come yesterday. Lamarcq, the handsome boy with white teeth of whom I wrote you, came. If possible, he is better looking now, with a healthy, out-of-door complexion. He told me he had eaten before coming, but I had not, so he got outside another meal. He's in the 7th Cuirassiers, but I noticed No. 29 on his collar, and asked him what it was.

"Oh," he said, "we weren't allowed to go out to-day, because we have to be ready to leave for St Etienne to-morrow to put down the strikes, so I asked a *copain* to lend me the top of his uniform, and when the sentry stopped me and said I couldn't go out, I told him I didn't belong to this caserne, that I was on furlough and had come to see a friend."

I asked Lamarcq how he would get in without being caught, and he, who has beautiful teeth, said he would claim to be a toothless man (*édenté*), because they send men to Lyons for facial surgery. Really, he's extremely amusing, always telling the tricks he has played to get out of going back to the front. Can one blame him? He's been there three years, and we barely saved him at St Valéry. The hair will never cover the scar on his head where he was hit the last time.

I found Ravet down stairs with a *camarade*,

drinking a bottle of beer. The *camarade* leaves to-morrow for Salonika, and though only two hundred of them are going, they send an escort of four hundred to take them to the station, to make sure that they get there. That will show you the morale of some of the troops. The Salonika front is calmer than the French front, but furlough comes only after a year, the climate is atrocious, and paludism is a common foe. Poor boys!



Lyons  
December 2, 1917

ALL letters now bear the stamp :

“S-O-U-S-C-R-I-V-E-Z  
“*A l’Emprunt National dans les Bureaux  
de Poste*”!”

This letter will probably have it.

You know that in this work of ours we always go to the head man, we don't bother with underlings. So it is not surprising that in Perpignan we conversed with the *Commandant d'Armes*, the military head of the 16th region, who has organized a society for the return of deserters from Spain to their regiments. It seems that many of them would return, but they dread the humiliation of being met at the frontier and led back between armed guards. In politeness he

said that if there was anything he could do for us we had only to call on him. Miss B. B. suggested that he was the man to get me a *Taisez-vous, méfiez-vous* sign which the *commandant d'armes* distributes and which I have long coveted. So I asked him. He thought it might be possible to get one for me, and that same evening instead of sending it round by a soldier he brought it in person. Then another afternoon he put his secretary at our disposal for the whole afternoon to help us get gasoline or anything else we wanted.

That was the time a sergeant got the shock of his life. We had been driving about Perpignan all the morning trying to find the *Sous-Intendance* to get gasoline! Everybody we asked directed us through a different narrow cobblestoned street. A nurse with whom we had talked at the big military hospital saw us and directed us quite wrong. Each time we'd stop to ask someone she'd rush up and pant in our faces: "*Mesdames, si vous avez de la place je monterai avec vous pour vous montrer le chemin,*" and each time we'd explain that we hadn't the room, and the chase would begin again. Finally we reached the arsenal and packed a soldier onto the gasoline tank, as he claimed to know the way.

Perpignan makes me mad. The people throng the streets, and you toot and toot at them and finally stop within two feet of them rather than run them down, and when they run into you they curse you for having scared them. Then small

boys constantly run under your wheels to get a hitch on the cart in front. I was thoroughly irritated when we arrived at our destination. Miss B. B. went in, but I stayed to put the last cans of gasoline into the tank, and the street was so narrow that another vehicle couldn't have passed, so I thought I'd better stay with the car. But Miss B. B. took so long that I finally went in to resurrect her. In the office I asked to be directed to the gasoline permit office. The sergeant looked me over and decided I must be a poor relation of the lady who had just gone up, so he answered: "*Madame vient de monter; elle est avec le capitaine*". After you've had the all powerful *sous-directeur* of the *Service de Santé* of Montpellier in your car where you can bully him and he can't get out, and he has asked you where you learned to speak French because you speak without any accent, a captain is a mere nothing. So I calmly answered: "*Très bien.*" Apparently I wasn't sufficiently impressed, for the sergeant repeated with more force this time: "*Mais elle est avec le capitaine.*" I don't know what kind of a reputation the captain has—maybe he can't manage more than one woman at a time—but to be stopped by a non-com. was more than I could stand, and I was already irritated, so I also forcefully answered: "*Mais qu'est-ce que cela me fait?*" At that he shrugged his shoulders and turned away, while a soldier stepped bravely forward and led me upstairs. Imagine the sergeant's horror when he saw me

coming down chatting gaily with the Commandant of the whole region!



Globe & Cecil Hôtel  
Lyon-Bellecour  
December 2, 1917

I WROTE you from Carcassonne, I think, that we had been recalled to the 14th region, because they were evacuating to receive the French from the Italian front. We are held up here a few days because I strained my back. It was a combination of starting the car (I have to crank it) one morning after a frost, and swinging Miss B. B.'s heavy suit-case into the car. However, I'm almost right again, as the result of three massages and ironings with an ordinary flat-iron. It struck me as highly humorous, as the only time I had seen it was in "Max und Moritz" when the boys cut the bridge and the school-master falls in and then is ironed out by his wife. Tuesday we shall get gasoline and then leave for Chambéry, Aix and Grenoble, and on down to Pau, if we don't have to take a side-trip to Modane on the frontier, where the Fund is going to establish a motor-kitchen. If we can get to Pau in four days, we ought to arrive the 13th, then I deposit Miss B. B. and the car, get my discharge and go up to Paris for a few days' vacation before I enlist again. I should have



liked to go from here to Paris, a shorter trip and by day, whereas from Pau there is only the night train and no sleeping car.



Grand Hotel  
Grenoble  
Isère

December 8, 1917

ONE year tomorrow since I left you all. And at that time who would have dreamed that one year later I should be in Grenoble!

You have probably long since received a letter telling you that I've changed my mind about going home. Apart from the joy of seeing you again I think, and I'm sure you do too, that it's better for me to stay over here. Of course if the Russian hordes not only make an armistice but become the ally of Germany they may overrun Europe and then you'll have to send me parcels of food to some civilian internment-camp. However, that won't happen while the Italians hang on.

As to "the Frenchman," as you call him, he is still in the army, detached now to the Officers' Mess at the *Ecole de Tir*, 27 kilometers outside of Lyons. Poor boy, I really feel more sorry for him than for any of my other *blessés*, because he never asks me for anything, and yet I am his *marraine*. He is now a waiter for the American

officers, and as the waiters are eight in number, and there are five hundred Americans, you can imagine that he has work enough. He says that as the Americans are leaving for the front about the 8th of December, they are giving "*banquet sur banquet—et champagne!*" To show you how much too big is the job of the Quartermaster's division in the French army, Ernest hasn't "touched" a uniform, a pair of shoes or any winter underclothing since he came out of St Valéry last April; and the uniform he has is the one in which he was wounded last April 16 in the famous attack the plans of which Malvy is said to have sold. I was so cold myself in Béziers that I wrote and asked him if he wouldn't like some warm things.

I had a great surprise today, a letter from Ravet's father, why I don't know. He accuses me *réception d'une lettre* which I never wrote, thanks me for the *bonté* I am showing to his son, whose mother died when he was four years old, and to whom his father, whose work is outdoors, *grains, fourrages, farines, pommes de terre*, could not give the education he wished. Then here's the joke: "*Je ne saurais donc trop vous prier, Mademoiselle, de faire pour lui ce qui est en votre pouvoir, par vos bons conseils, et lui remontre le moral dont il a grand besoin.*" Further on he says that if in the course of my travels I could give him the pleasure of making my acquaintance I should make of him "*un heureux*", hence he dares to hope that I will deign to visit the Côte d'Or. Positively I should

be a Solomon to supply all the advice for which I am asked, instead of being barely able to keep my own fingers out of the fire.

Of course, an *infirmière* is looked upon as a sort of machine that turns out a ready supply of sympathy, interest and advice, and I wasn't in the profession long enough, didn't pass along enough men, to get hardened into insincerity. I mean that the men when they left would be asked by the nurses to write, and they did, and the nurses rarely answered. I never asked for a letter, because I thought that if the men wanted to write they would, but when I got a card I answered. "Chicken" is really the only one whose trail I picked up sometime after leaving the hospital, and now he writes me three times a week, and if I don't answer soon enough I have the most pitiful wail that it is an eternity since I last wrote. Am I ill or have I had an accident, etc.? It keeps me on the jump, but I've never before had a letter from a parent except poor Mrs Bastide. She says the official announcement of Etienne's death came on the 1st of December and she is having a mass said for the repose of his soul on the 10th.

We are on the way to Pau and after we leave here make no stops except for lunch and bed until we get there. From Pau I go direct to Paris for a rest during the Christmas holidays. You may not hear from me again till I get to Paris, for my hands will be full meantime.

Someday I do want to show you, Mother, the valley of the Lodève and Montpellier, and the

valley of the Agly from Perpignan to Quillan, and the Gorges de l'Aude and Carcassone. And while we're at Montpellier we could go, *via* Lunel, to Aiguesmortes, and little Madame Rouvière, who keeps the *épicerie* at Lunel, would think it her crowning joy if you came to see her. While we're in the Lozère valley, we'll stop in Aniane to see poor Madame Bastide, and then down to Amélie-les-Bains, near the Spanish border, and bask in that glorious sunshine among the foothills of the Pyrenees. We'll have a perfect time, going on and staying where we want to. It's my eternal sorrow in these interesting places that you're not with me.

## VACATIONING IN PARIS







## *Vacationing in Paris*

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Hotel Pétrograd  
33 Rue Caumartin  
Paris  
January 1, 1918

I'VE been here in Paris over a week and haven't had a minute to write to you because I've too much to say. I've been offered a post at American Headquarters at the front and am waiting to see if I get it before signing up for anything else. Mrs Armstrong of Lake Squam offered it to me, or rather proposed me for it, as they need an A. B. and easy-flowing French.

The Prince de Galles was full, so I am at the Y. M. C. A. hostess house, Hotel Pétrograd, rue Caumartin, all the baths you want and tips included in board. Mrs Armstrong is in charge and we have American cooking. It tastes so funny.

Last night I went to a dance given by the Soldiers and Sailors Club, escorted by an Auburndale teacher, Private Allen, whom I met at the Soldiers and Sailors tree on Christmas.

Two of my *fillets* are in Paris and Sunday I took them to Versailles. One of them is fine, the other a butterfly. The fine one, Vallez, I take to the Invalides today.



Paris  
January 8, 1918

I'M not coming home now after all. I got to this town and found so many Americans and all busy at something so the fever got me, too, and having loafed for two weeks I'm fit and eager to begin. I don't know at what, but it will be something, probably not nursing.

A few nights ago I met Bill McRossie who is running the export department of the Red Cross. He asked me what I was doing and when I said, "Nothing," he said he'd been chasing Paris over for a week to find me to ask me to be assistant in his office. He said he did a business of twenty-five million dollars and needed "some one with a head who could make decisions" to leave in charge when he was visiting canteens. I was so surprised that I couldn't get my mouth closed to answer for some minutes, during which he told me that he had much confidential information about movements of troops, number of men over here, etc., that he didn't care to confide to a secretary but that he needed some one who could type and do short hand. I told him he needed

some one who had had a business education. He replied that a person with a business education wouldn't have the head which he needed more, that he had experts for the business end, but wanted some one to leave in charge. Of course, I was highly flattered, but I think he's making a mistake. Still, it's not irreparable, for if he finds I don't come up to the requirements he can move me on as I shall not be signed up for any definite period. It would be a change and I need that. I've had all the driving I can stand for the moment, and there's no brand of hospital that I don't know root and branch. Both the interpreter job and the Red Cross would be office work but would be new and for the moment at least interesting. I always said I wouldn't do office work. How have the mighty fallen! And yet if I do it I make my own terms. When I signed up with the Fund I said, "Yes" to everything they proposed. "Uniform?"—"Yes."—"Volunteer?"—"Yes."—But the other day when I went to the Women's War Relief Corps and they asked me if I was under obligation to any other society and, thinking of the interpreter job and Bill's, I said, "Momentarily." "Will you sign up for six months?"—"No," flatly.—"Why?"—"Because I want to go home."—"Well, just say when you want to go and we'll let you off at any moment." I got consideration because I'd had a year's experience in war-work and because I didn't agree to all they asked. At the Fund I agreed and got none. Moral: make yourself hard to get and the world will climb over itself

to get you. I told Bill I'd almost promised myself to the interpreter job and a sob came into his voice. I have to laugh! "You can fool some of the people all of the time" etc.



Paris  
January 13, 1918

Dear Dad,

Do you remember my writing from St Valéry of a charming Madame Le Bourgeois who was very good to me and was the aristocrat of the neighborhood? One sweltering day in June she asked me out to her lovely chateau to witness the All Saints procession which took place in her garden. Her chateau has been in the family since before Columbus sailed the ocean blue. The altar used on this occasion was built like a bureau so that if they had a mass going on during the Revolution they could shut it up and plead not guilty if the authorities dropped in. She had at least two sons, and the wife of one of them, Pierre, had a baby whom Miss Nelson helped into the world. While she was on special duty at the chateau she used to bring back glowing accounts of the family of Pierre Le Bourgeois. He had just returned from a year's stay in Russia where he went on a special mission for the French Government, and now he is bound for Mexico *via* New York. Madame Le Bour-

geois asked me to give him a letter to you, which I am doing. Madame is a wonder and Miss Nelson tells me that Pierre is the cream of the family. His wife is splendid, and he must be, too, to have such a wife and mother. Show him a bit of American cordiality for his mother's sake—she was so cordial to me. I know my standing in the family will go up when M. Pierre meets you and writes home about you.

I haven't time to write more, for I must send M. Pierre the note of introduction.



Paris

January 21, 1918

I SAW Mrs Vanderbilt and she said she could use me right away in a French canteen at Jessain, a tiny town in the Department of the Aube between Troyes and Chaumont.

I went down to the Red Cross to get the Red Cross card and the worker's card required by the A. E. F. They asked me if I had had my passport stamped. I said, "By whom?"—The young man said, "By the Provost-Marshal."—"No."—"Why didn't you do it when you first landed?"—"Why? There's a good reason why. There wasn't any Provost-Marshal here when I first landed." It's funny that the people in that office seem to think the war started when they landed about three months ago. So I went down

to the Provost-Marshal and signed his book. An autograph collector wouldn't give a *sou* for my signature. He can find it in too many places over here. When I told the Provost-Marshal that my authority for being in France wasn't my passport but my *récépisse de carte d'identité* and unfurled my three feet of paper covered with French commissaire stamps he had to hang onto the table and admitted that I had seen more of this war than he had. It's a real pleasure to put a kink into a Provost-Marshal. Then I went to a tailor to have *ciel bleu* collar and cuffs put onto my uniform. That's the insignia of the canteen workers. They are changing the uniform this spring, so there was no use in getting a fresh one of the present type and then having to buy a new one later. I was afraid it would ruin the appearance of my uniform, but everyone says: "Your uniform is the best I've seen," and I think so, too, but I shall look like a regular rainbow in khaki with blue collar and cuffs and a red embroidered A. R. C. on the shoulders. *Mais, c'est la guerre!*

I've signed up for three months. I won't sign with anyone for six. You can see the end of three months, but the end of six is too far off to see even dimly.

Vallez, the *filleur* whom I like so much, is in the hospital at Rueil just beyond Neuilly. More than a year ago he went to Salonika, a strong man, able to lift a 160-pound weight shoulder-high with one hand. Today he is a shadow. He was seized with fever just before he was to be



evacuated for France for thirty days' furlough, and has been in the hospital ever since his arrival with attacks every ten days running a temperature of 101 and lasting four days. The treatment is blood-letting and an injection of half a pint of serum which burns like a hot iron and injected into the hip stiffens the leg for the whole ten days. It's a pathetic sight to see a big man wilt before your eyes. The perspiration stands out on his forehead in big drops and then he begins to shiver as with the ague and racking pains shoot through his whole body.

Cohendy, another *filleur*, has been at Monastir over a year and was coming on his thirty days' furlough at Christmas, but because of the Italian offensive had to spend part of his furlough in forced marches to the Albanian front. Out there it's cold as Greenland at night, even in summer, and during the day they swelter.

Now "Chicken" is asking to serve with the artillery in Salonika. Can you beat the courage of some of these boys? That is why France has held the boches so long. They were all like that in the beginning, but three and a half years has drained some of them dry. You can't fail to understand and to sympathize. That's why boys like Etienne and "Chicken" and Vallez, who champs under his fever and can't wait to get at another boche, drag at your heartstrings. Their courage is indomitable. Sunday I went to the Invalides with Vallez. In the court is a big collection of trophies taken from the Germans—guns of all calibers and *minenwerfers*,

which Vallez says aren't so very dangerous because you can see them twisting and circling through the air and so gauge where they will fall and leave them that spot undisputed. We saw aeroplanes, tiny graceful ones for pursuit, German planes with the large black cross on the wings, French planes with a large tricolor bull's-eye. Guynemer's "Vieux Charles" is there, the plane in which he brought down his first nineteen enemy planes. The wings are loaded with flowers, mimosas, immortelles, wreaths from an adoring and grief-stricken people. It's a dainty cream-colored one-seater with a black machine-gun looking out over the hood of the motor. On the body is painted in red, "Vieux Charles," and behind that is the red flying stork, the emblem of the Cigogne Esquadron.

While looking at the German machine guns Vallez told me that they mowed down battalions of French in the beginning of the war. The feet spread to any angle but can be flattened and when so carried by two men and covered with a sheet look like stretchers. In the beginning when both sides went into No-Man's land to pick up the wounded and neither side fired on the Red Cross stretcher bearers, the Germans, a brassard on their arms, carried a machine gun as a stretcher near to their unsuspecting opponents, snatched off the disguising sheet, turned the crank and mowed down the unsuspecting French. Pretty practice, worthy of Kultur!

Monday evening I went to a small party for American soldiers at Mrs Chase's apartment

(she and Mrs Mendenhall have the St Anne canteen for Americans) and found there Norman Hall, my one-time *blessé*, author of "Kitchener's Mob" and the "High Adventure." He came to the Ambulance with an angry wound while I was there. This is how he got it. An American major was visiting his esquadrille and to show the major the real thing they all went up with orders to meet over Soissons. Hall had an old plane, only 140 horsepower, and when he got up there was no one in sight. Looking about, he finally descried a group of eight planes flying towards Germany and as his group normally took that course he headed that way thinking to join them. When he got near the group he saw his mistake but kept on. Most of the German planes were above him, but one was on his level and he made for it and got his man, but at the same moment one of the others got him in the left arm. The gas control was on that side and he was powerless to stop—lost control entirely. He dropped from about 4500 feet to about 200 when he managed to get the pin between his knees and shut off the engine. He didn't know whether he was within the German lines or not. Then everything went black. Later he learned that his plane had dropped in the front-line trenches, but the wings striking the parapets broke the fall. He was pulled out, carried to a dressing station, and five days later arrived at the Ambulance.

Another time he was flying in an old plane over the Vosges when his engine stopped. There

was no way to start it again. His only chance was to plane down to a landing place, but the hills were high and wooded. He aimed for an open space on the top of one of them but when his wheels touched the ground the plane kept on down-hill towards a ravine. He went through a barbed-wire fence, took a limb off a tree, but brought up at the top of the ravine against a stone wall which fortunately held.

Last night at a party at the St Anne Cantine I picked up these stories. British troops were marching through a French town. Among them were men in kilties. The onlookers were amazed. One said they must be women. Another said they couldn't be for some of them had moustaches. Finally a learned Frenchman said: "I have it. They're the middle sex regiment." Here's another. Military policeman to truck driver: "You gave me a dirty look."—"You have a dirty look, but I didn't give it to you." And here's another. Tommy, coming from the trenches, felt a little stranger biting at his neck. As he bent over and caught him a shell whizzed through the space where his head had been. Looking at the visitor which he held between his finger and thumb he said: "I can't give you the V. C. nor the D. S. O., but (replacing the "cootie" on his neck) go ahead!" And here's another. A fussy old lady, visiting a wounded Tommy, asked where he was wounded. "In the Somme."—"Yes, but how?"—"Going over the parapet."—"Yes, but where in your body?"—

"Well, ma'am, if anyone was to send me seats for the play, I'd have no use for them."



Paris

January 28, 1918

I SENT Uncle Allston's Christmas present to Ernest for his mother. She has been in a hospice many years and is probably in her last illness and gets little care and he has nothing with which to provide comforts for her in her last hours. I feel more sympathy for him and for Vallez than for any of the others because they ask nothing of me.

The Gothas visited us Wednesday night. I was writing a letter when I heard the bugles but I thought it was not worth while going downstairs, so I drew the heavy curtains at my windows and went on writing. The next minute the light went out. I decided to turn in, for it was late and cold and I had been entertaining a soldier, formerly a teacher at Milton Academy, and I was tired. I lay with the window open trying to distinguish the French from the German planes and drowsily thinking: "How absurd to rouse us with bells and candles for the cellar when the Germans have never got into Paris," and I was comfortably listening to the boom-boom of the anti-aircraft guns when I

heard a whistle and a crash and sat up with my eyes popping out of my head. Here was the real thing at last. I wondered where the next bomb would strike and decided I wouldn't bank on the resistance the roof of this hotel could offer. So I pulled on my petticoat and my fur coat and started down stairs. All the nurses and women doctors and nurses of various kinds were on the stairs and in the halls. Nurses who had been at the front and heard guns before were telling their life's history all in one chapter. I wasn't interested, for I knew that the War really began in earnest when they got into it. I found a couch in the parlor and the next thing I knew was a soft hand blocking the air current to my nose. "*Ah! Pardon, Madame!*" It was the small cook who wears a high white starched cook's cap. So I decided for bed. Later in the night I was wakened by a bright light shining in my eyes. The raid was over and the electricity had been turned on.

I'm off soon for Jessains. I've met a Miss Mary E. Tyler who is to go there, too. She made me sore by telling me that my "orders" were to do so and so. Nobody gives me "orders" and she wasn't in a position to transmit any. Mrs Vanderbilt, my boss, asks me when I'll be ready to go, and do I think I can do so and so, and of course I make it my business to do it.

I'd be at Jessains, in the Aube between Troyes and Chaumont, now if Dr Woodruff hadn't sent me to bed for a bronchitis, nothing serious, and



Miss Lane thought she could cure me at the cantine. Dr Woodruff, who is a real woman, the kind God made in his leisure moments when he had time to remember all the things that go to make up the best kind of woman, sympathy, efficiency, magnetism, reasonable good looks, put her foot down and so I am still here. By the way, she brought a girl in to see me and nodding at me said: "I'd give anything to have had the experiences that child has had. I wonder if she'd tell us something of them." I said there wasn't much to tell, but they pulled up about a table and the people who were having tea came up and soon there was standing room only. Fortunately, just at that moment a lady pushed forward and said that Miss Lane, with whom I had an appointment, was waiting and so the recital of my experiences came to an end as soon as it had begun.



Paris  
February 6, 1918

I FELL in today with Richmond Mayo-Smith, whom I hadn't seen since the winter of 1911-12. He's now a captain in the gas service and says the most trying thing in his job is waiting for headquarters' decisions as to the kinds of gas and the location of the plants.

Paris  
February 9, 1918

I WONDER if you're as crazy today as I am. I've just received your letter saying that Knox sailed about the 18th and two days ago we heard of the torpedoing of the "Tuscania." I ran down to the casualty department of the Red Cross and got the head man, Mr Chadwick, to telegraph to England for a complete list and he will telephone me as soon as he gets it. Then I went to the provost marshal's office and put him onto Knox's trail and also to the American Embassy. Everyone tells me that, sailing in a convoy, he couldn't have got to the Irish coast so soon, but I'm at your old trick of worrying.

They tell me at the Red Cross that they will probably send me to Epernay instead of to Jes-sains because they need strong fresh workers there. I've been loafing so long I want hard work.



Paris  
February 14, 1918

I'M getting out a new passport as the old one has been renewed to the limit. Doesn't my photograph look like a saturated solution of crystal domino? And yet they say the camera doesn't lie.

By Sunday or Monday at the latest, I expect to be at the Cantine des Deux Drapeaux, Service de la Croix Rouge, at Epernay, Marne. It's a canteen for French soldiers where they serve meals and have a sleeping barrack which must be evacuated in case of bombardment. One night it was evacuated four times. So I expect that there will be activity enough to keep me occupied.



Paris  
February 17, 1918

WE had another raid tonight, of no importance. I took shelter with a large crowd in a métro station. Was out with an American soldier.



LA CANTINE DES DEUX  
DRAPEAUX







## *La Cantine Des Deux Drapeaux*

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Epernay  
February 19, 1918

I'VE arrived at my canteen, and I find I can't tell you where I am, nor send you a post card. There are eighteen workers. The head is Miss Henrietta Ely, who was at Murray Bay; Miss Bertha Coolidge is also here; two Misses Lansing, aunts of Eleanor Dulles, Bryn Mawr, 1917, whom I have seen twice at Paris; and a Miss Pond, cousin of Mrs Fitch. She took me in hand when I arrived, went with me to the station to get a *commissaire* to push my trunk up here in a hand-cart, then took me to the *commissaire de police* to have my *carnet d'étranger* stamped. As we were coming back, she stopped in a tobacco shop to get a paper, and to my extreme surprise and delight I saw the shelves lined with tobacco of all sorts. I thought of Cohendy smoking corn leaves, and of Berry craving tobacco and unable to get it, and immediately purchased some for both of them. In Paris you can inquire in tobacco shops by the hundred and inquire in vain for tobacco, while here the shelves are loaded

with it. Being accustomed to Paris ways, I asked how much the girl could sell me, and she said as much as I wanted! Another surprise.

The workers here live in two comfortable houses. The one where Miss Ely and Miss Coolidge are is full (ten workers), so I'm in the other one with Miss Pond. I have a room-mate, a Mrs Laing, who is on duty to-night from 7 to 1 A. M., so she'll come in in the middle of the night. There are two beds in the room, one double wooden bed, and one narrow iron one. She has the narrow one. Of course that suits me. Imagine coming into the war zone, within hearing distance of the guns, and having a huge double bed! The rate is 9.50 francs a day, including three meals, lights and a fire. Laundry of course is extra.

I was due yesterday about 10:30 A. M., but couldn't get away, as I had to get some money and leave my address with Morgan-Harjes, and get some shoes. The only pair I could find to fit me was black pumps at seventy francs, besides 4.50 francs to have the heels lowered! This delay made me too late for the day train yesterday, so I decided to stay on another day and come on the noon train.

I've just come from dinner. We had delicious clear soup with a flavor of onions, vermicelli with bacon, then roast chicken and potatoes creamed with parmesan, salad, apple-sauce and coffee. Now I'm to get into a huge feather bed with a hot water bottle. That isn't bad for the sufferings of the war zone, is it?

When I arrived I went right to the canteen to find where I was to go. It's one of these tarpaper shacks, with the French and American flags crossed and painted on a shield over the door. They have a phonograph, and the soldiers were sitting eating at long tables. I understand they serve two regular meals, lunch and dinner, and the rest of the time hot drinks. Some Americans also wandered in with me. Later in the afternoon I saw something new to me, that is, "reformed" horses, the hair all shaved off about their wound. I suppose they were "reformed", at all events they didn't look like Longchamps entries.

I have a Franklin stove effect in my room, on the top of which we heat water. It holds only a tea-cupful, but that helps. I think I told you we have had a cold spell since Thursday last, but it was warmer here than when I left Paris.

In case of an *alerte* all lights have to be out and the canteen evacuated for half an hour. An *alerte* doesn't mean that a German aeroplane is hovering overhead, but just that it has crossed the German lines, bound for "somewhere in France." Of course, as the canteen keeps open all night, putting out the lights somewhat complicates matters, as the men are either in the course of eating or have paid good money for an egg, which may be boiling at the moment, and one possible aeroplane is of little consequence to them. But out they must get with as much despatch as possible, to return at the end

of half an hour to a hard egg or a cold meal.

I think I shall like my job here. Miss Pond, my boss, looks good to me. The administration is much less straight-laced than it was at St Valéry. Just one instance: after supper, Miss Smith, who is the oldest resident of this house and really in charge, though she seems to be in the early thirties, passed cigarettes. At St Valéry if you wanted to smoke you retired to your own room, drew the blinds and stuffed the key-hole.

Yesterday when I went to Morgan-Harjes I found your letter of January 31 with some amusing clippings. Also the orange muffler (a beauty) and stockings and two 5-lb boxes of Mary Elizabeth's, which were as welcome as a gold mine.



Epernay  
February 25, 1918

I HAVE just come off a midnight to 7 A. M. shift at the canteen where we serve upon the average 600 chocolates and 250 coffees a night. The rush comes at 5:30 when a train comes in. The men prefer to sleep on the benches and floor of the canteen rather than in the straw beds provided by the Government, for the straw "crawls." It makes locomotion in the cantine difficult—the climbing over prostrate forms.

Epernay  
March 1, 1918

I AM now standing at my *guichet* waiting for another call for coffee or chocolate. Outside the window is a white tiled shelf on which the men lean and onto which I slide the bowls full of hot drink. Of course I'm constantly interrupted while I'm writing and each time I'm going to put a dash and the drinks I serve. Sometimes (three chocolates and fill the pitcher from the big caldron on the gas-burner, two coffees) the men come along and seeing me writing murmur that they are deranging me as I throw down my pen, other times they stand diffidently in the offing. I look up as the shadow hovers before me and seeing the remains of a repas ticket in the man's hand lay down my pen (15 coffees and fill the pitcher, 1 chocolate)—(5 chocolates, coffee) but I'm losing count. One wanted some bread and an officer came and ordered three chocolates and asked the soldier who helps in the kitchen to (more drinks, the second lunch coffee calls are beginning) step to the door and ask a soldier whom he would see (chocolate) holding two horses, to step up and have it. So I went out and took the bowl of piping hot chocolate and held the horses while he drank. He was a heavily bearded man who was (coffee) most appreciative. The officer came back (coffee) and leaned on my tiled slab thanking me and saying: "*Il faut tout de même que ce petit gars ait son chocolat*" (coffee).

Often a man prefers to have his coffee or chocolate poured into his own tin-cup which usually has never been washed since the day he received it and of course is used for everything. Often as I pour the coffee the men say: "*Pas de gniolle?*" (alcohol) and I shake my head. When I pour the coffee into the "*quart*" I comment on its previous contents and they answer: "*Oui! ça a fini par avoir un goût quelconque.*"

I had to stop. The rush came and now it's March 7th. I've been promoted! I'm now housekeeper on the 7-12 midnight shift. That is I keep the keys to the store-room and bread-closet, give out supplies and keep the servants from going off with cakes of chocolate or cans of milk, and serve the 7-9 o'clock part of the evening meal, wipe the silver-ware (tin), fry eggs or make omelettes, and cut bread with a regular cutter in which I expect some day to leave a portion of my left thumb, and try to get as much work as possible out of the servants without having them go out on strike. Also, I have to keep a list of everything I give out, eggs, sugar, vegetables, turnips, potatoes, apples, sausages, cheese, bread. Last night I cut 26 loaves, large horse-shoe shaped. They cost 17 cents a loaf and I have to get 17 pieces out of each loaf so as not to lose money.

Between whittling wet kindlings to get small enough bits to burn and then coaxing the bigger sticks, and then adding coal a few lumps at a time, and washing my hands to remove traces of the coal-shovel, this letter is apt to look some-



what grimy, but please forgive it; I'm trying to coax a fire for my room-mate when she comes back from work as I relieve her.

We had all kinds of excitement last night. In the middle of the *repas* we heard the two guns which announce an *alerte*. Immediately the lights began going out as we have strict orders to put out lights and evacuate as 7 minutes is the time a plane would take to reach us. In the pitch darkness Mrs Lawrence, the former house-keeper, who talks as though her mouth were full of hot mush and who has acquired a sore-eyed fox-terrier from a soldier, asked me for the keys to let her dog out of the store-room where he is kept to kill rats. I've never seen such big ones and when we imported a professional ratter from Châlons, a nice fox-terrier, the rats forsook the cellar and scuttled round the kitchen. Then she came back and suggested we lock up the silver in the bread closet. The "silver" consists of twisted tin forks and spoons. Then we had to get the men out. Miss Lane, who was at the *caisse*, and although she's old enough to know better, gray hair, is constantly making eyes at every one, had yelled in emphatic tones to an uninterested audience that the lights were going to be extinguished and everyone would have to get out according to orders. But nevertheless demands kept on for eggs, etc. Each time I'd say: "Keep your tickets", or your forks, or whatever it was, "and we'll redeem them when we open again, or if that's too late bring them the next time you come through, they're always good".

When the lights went out and I'd thrown something crashing to the floor in my efforts to lock up the silver, I left the kitchen and went into the canteen. There I took the first man I met into my confidence, told him why we had to close and touching him on the arm (clinging-vine stuff) asked him to help me get the others out. Even in the little rest room where the garden-chairs were all occupied by sleepers, the same methods brought about the same results. "*Très bien mademoiselle, à l'instant*"! Then you'd see the soldier prop open his eyes, pick up his *mu-settes* and suggest to anyone the least recalcitrant that it wasn't Mademoiselle's fault, ending with: "*Allons, tu viens?*" In a few minutes the place was cleared, I locked the windows (my flash gave the light necessary) and then went over to the *abri* where I found the three cooks and Miss Comstock. When we came back I looked for my keys in vain. I scoured the muddy street. Nothing! And I in charge and the food locked up! My only thought was to get back to the canteen and search the floor before the soldiers came in, but fortunately Mrs Lawrence had them.

We have an accountant here, a Miss Fee, who is a typical old maid, suspicious of every motive, so afraid she'll be "done." For instance, an officer wrote to Miss Ely and said he was lonely and would she find him a *marraine*. Miss Fee: "It wasn't a *marraine* he wanted, just mark my words; he had his eye on Miss Ely's dollars." Just now she's down at the piano pounding out:

"Verdun, on ne passe pas", racing through it, her foot a fixture on the loud pedal. I have to laugh, and I'm sure you'll see the funny side of this, too. When I first came here this place was like a tomb, nobody daring to speak in a jovial tone except Miss Fee who talks as though her interlocutor were three blocks away and getting further every minute. Every bit of gaiety or song was frozen on my lips. However, up here with my room-mate we rag each other all the time, and one day I forgot and came downstairs singing. Miss Fee seized me and yelled about my "beautiful voice, and what's more, I can tell that it's been trained. I'd love to play your accompaniments, Miss Hardon, if you'll let me!" I was overcome. Now she's at me all the time to sing and I keep putting her off because I'm not going to shatter the illusion of having a trained voice. We no longer have the sepulchral atmosphere nor have to listen to her mechanical rendering of Chopin's waltzes, for the soldiers sing down at the Foyer and we get the music and Miss Fee spends her leisure moments banging it out.

Mrs S—, the southern lady with the transformation which curls all over her forehead while the rest of her hair is straight as a pike-staff, the lady with the infected thumb which was opened at the hospital when I took her down there and stood by in case of need and whom I've been bandaging and dressing and feeding since, objects when Jeanne, the waitress, tells her that if she takes so much hors d'oeuvres there won't

be enough for the others. You see, we have to have two sets of meals. Miss Comstock and I have dinner at six because this week we work at the canteen from seven to midnight. Then the people we relieve have dinner about 7:15.



Epernay  
March 8th

MY room-mate has roused me for the last time this morning at 9:30 bringing up my breakfast and five letters. Tell me I'm not pampered because we can't get breakfast downstairs after nine. But that means getting up at 8:30 and when I work till midnight 8:30 seems like the middle of the night. But my room-mate really is a brick. She worked with the United Charities in Chicago. The most cheerful moments I have are when we are up here together for we rag each other all the time, but every now and then I jump at her when in an unemphatic way she'll say: "Hell! Why didn't I put that collar in the wash!" Just now she's brought me a big pitcher of hot water so I must get up.

You know some of these people make me awfully mad. Miss ———, who was so friendly in Paris, got here a few days ahead of me, but anyone would think she owns the canteen from the way she acts. Yet when she was running the Foyer one night and I went down to look on, at every song she turned to me

and asked what it was and whether she'd better stop it. I wasn't running it so I expressed no opinion. Finally one performer started "Madelon". Well, "Madelon" is the popular French marching song like "Tipperary" or "Smile, Smile, Smile". The theme is that Madelon is the attractive bar-maid in an ivy-covered café near some French billets and that every soldier tells her his troubles and makes love to her thinking for the moment that she's the girl he left behind. Finally a corporal asks for her hand but she says she can't spare it, she needs both to serve wine to the soldiers, and anyway why should she marry one man when she loves a whole regiment? This night the performer changed the words to make the ivy-covered café our Foyer, and by a gesture implied that Miss ——— was Madelon. She turned panting to me: "Miss Hardon, what shall I do? Should I stop it? Tell me quickly what would you do?" There wasn't anything in it; the man was paying her a compliment by implying that she had the charm of Madelon, and so I told her to look unconscious if she couldn't look pleased. Some of these people are such fools!

One of my former blessés at St Valéry has turned up at the canteen. Once when I was at the chocolate window for the first two weeks so busy pouring that only occasionally could I look up to see if the black hands into which I was giving the bowl were really those of a Senegalese, I heard some one say: "*Tiens! Voilà la Mees!*" and I saw my amusing adjutant of the big ward,

the man who imitated the noises of various animals, and used the perfumed soap and toilet water, and used to shave every day, and who when he left showed me the maps. The hospital work was more interesting because there I got to know the men whereas here they are mostly passing shadows, except a few such as "your captive" as Miss Comstock calls him, who escaped from Germany, and certain others whom we get to know because they sing at the Foyer or come frequently to chat at the window. The "captive" was clean-shaven and looked just a boy, but to my surprise he has seen 35 months of trenches and is married and going on 24 years old. I was ragging him a bit and telling him that when he attained my advanced years, some thing, I've forgotten what. Then he turned on me and said I couldn't be over 25 "*parce que vos dents sont blanc comme du lait*". I told him I didn't realize one told a woman's age by the same methods one used on a horse!



Epernay  
March 17, 1918

I LEFT the end of my left thumb in the bread-cutter the other day, but it's doing well.

I'm under treatment. I have to stay in bed of course, and that suits me beautifully because as housekeeper on the morning shift I spent most



of my time in the store-room and it was cold as Greenland. Tuesday night in the normal sequence of events I work on the morning shift and then go back again at midnight until seven. If the doctor keeps me in bed long enough I may miss the whole shift, which loss would not bring tears to my eyes. I should like to do a bit of it though, just to know the housekeeper's duties during those hours. I have to chase a mustard leaf over my chest and back, waiting until the skin gets red and then moving on the leaf. Then at nine o'clock I have to take a powder in warm milk which is designed to soothe my cough so that I can sleep, for three nights I have passed coughing continuously and getting little sleep either for myself or for Mrs Laing. It seems I have bronchitis again, the same thing I had in Paris, but here there's no incentive to gad in the evenings and my recovery will probably be more rapid and more complete. I am all dressed underneath, woolen stockings and some woolen knitted socks and other things in proportion. As we had a peaceful night last night, the Boches are due tonight. My fur-coat, muffler and flashlight are laid out on the bed in case I have to make a hurried plunge for the cave.

Since I came off that evening shift we have had two raids worth while. One followed so rapidly on the *alerte* that we couldn't distinguish the "*paragrêle*", the gun which gives the warning. We hurried down cellar, the cook hanging round my neck praying. At first this disconcerted me but now I have become used to it.

When we have established ourselves on old wine cases, rugs wrapped around us and hot-water bottles passing from hand to hand, the different emotions come out. Ever-tactful Mrs Seabrooke talks of anything but the bombardment so as to distract our thoughts; Miss Comstock, Vassar '16, who talks as though she had a year in which to get her sentence out, and who wants what she wants when she wants it, not an openly aggressive person, but a steady undercurrent moving her way, hushes everybody so as to hear the different noises and tag them as 75's, 105's, mitrailleuse, bomb or torpedo. Miss Fee, the conversational, tells of their big bombardment when in the other house, imitates the noises and tells us what each sound we hear is, usually getting them wrong, while Jeanne, the calm waitress who sits in the corner, her arms crossed, saying nothing, corrects her. Jeanne's chief remarks are: "*Non! Ce n'est pas une bombe*", in such a convincing calm tone that you know it wasn't even when the whole house shook. The cook prays and quivers all over at a loud explosion, and when she seems ready to leap out of her skin and hence upset the equilibrium of the case she and I are sharing, I put an arm on her shoulder and ask her whether it's a boche or a French plane we hear purring. I can tell the difference now because a French plane purrs continually whereas a boche imitates a cat, there's the regular catch for breath, and anyway a French plane wouldn't be sweeping the streets with a machine-gun. But Claire goes into a

shrill, breathless explanation, and the box retains its equilibrium. I must say I'm like Miss Comstock, I do wish they would all keep quiet so that we could hear what arms are at work, but I don't say anything until there has been a lull, and then it's: "Come on, let's go up and sit by the fire until it begins again."

The first night the bombardment lasted only about twenty minutes and under Miss Fee's guidance we were sure that no bombs had fallen, that it was merely an effort to stop another advance on Paris. Hence we were surprised the next morning to learn at the canteen that two bombs had altered the decoration on two houses, and broken some glass in the church windows. One of the bombs exploded on the sidewalk in front of the house and there wasn't enough left of the two people who were in the cellar, to pack up and take home. Two others were killed as they were crossing a court to go down into the cellar, and they had just been evacuated from Rheims. It makes me a fatalist. If there's a bomb that's marked with my name it will find me even if I'm in the cellar; nevertheless I think it's not a bomb but a bit of rope that bears my name.

I had to drop this letter in the middle of that last sentence because I heard the fatal three shots that announce a plane headed in this direction. Anna, the little Belgian refugee who is one of our three maids, shot downstairs like a flash, carrying her clothes and put them on in the dining-room. I was the next to arrive, and then

Miss Fee who had stopped to wake Miss Comstock. We sat in the parlor for sometime. Miss Fee and I went to sleep, but nothing happened further so now we are again on our way to bed.



Epernay  
March 18, 1918

Two nights after that first raid we had another but this time it gave us about ten minutes to prepare before the firing. We took to the cellar and three times felt the house vibrate as though a bomb had fallen near it and failed to explode. One of the lucky incidents of the other raid was that an incendiary torpedo buried itself harmlessly four feet deep in the side-walk. Each time the house shook we thought it was a repetition of that other torpedo. The firing lasted about half an hour and then in the quiet Miss Fee thought she'd go to the canteen and see if they had suffered in any way. I had gone with her the last time when we found the lights all on, the soldiers inside playing the phonograph and not a woman, American or cook in sight. I thought they'd all fled and so I put the lights out and proceeded to evacuate. But this time my cold interested me more than the canteen so I sat in front of the parlor fire as first stop on the way to my room. Miss Fee had hardly banged the door when the firing began again, and it didn't take her long to get back down into the

cellar. This time they flew low and swept the streets with machine-guns! It makes the same noise as winding the big clock we had on the stairs in New York, only quicker.

Do take some pictures of the interior of the house and send them to me. Heavens! It seems so long since I was there and sometimes it seems as though I'd just almost burst wanting to see you and Dad and the dogs and the place and Wilton and HOME. I'm glad the necklace arrived and I hope you'll wear it once at least. I got Mme Moncel to help me choose it.



Epernay  
March 29, 1918

I WENT out today and coming back I was held up on the curb 15 minutes before I could cross. Why, it's worse than 5th Ave. at 5:30 P.M., only unfortunately it's not pleasure but deadly business. Going in both directions, going up full and coming back empty. And each one with its own insignia in a round circle. Either a white background with a blue or red parrot, red background with a white stork in various positions, red background with the white silhouettes of dancing women, etc. etc. Traffic policemen regulate their course. Sometimes we stop a camion by the canteen, ask how many men there are and throw in one or two packs of cigarettes and

wish the men good luck. They thank us cordially and start off waving their *képis* and singing "Madelon", the best march in any language. I can't elaborate but everything of every weight goes by. Sometimes I wonder why they don't camouflage the white horses. As they go by the house some of the men see me looking out the window and smile and I always respond and as they get further down the street they turn round on their horses or lean way out of the truck to smile again. Poor fellows!



Epernay  
March 30, 1918

AT the Foyer we have movies every afternoon and evening. Unfortunately the program changes only once a week so that those of us who work there in the afternoon and evening realize the feelings of a theatre usher seeing the same show again and again. I have the evening shift at the Foyer this week and my evenings are never twice alike. The first evening we had come to the last reel of the show when there was an *alerte* and we closed for half an hour seeking shelter in the *abri*. It was a glorious moonlight night. There were several soldiers down there and of course the canteen workers and cooks, Miss Ely came dashing down and regaled us with an account of the bombardment of Châlons



and the burning of the station. We were lighted, the *abri* is underground, by the clever plan of a soldier who stuck his blade through the crack between two of the boards forming the wall and stood a candle on it. I don't like the *abri* because it's impossible to tell if the rumbling we hear is the guns or a camion. After half an hour all was quiet and I opened up again. A man came in and when he saw the piano threw his hands in the air and made one leap for it. We sat entranced at the sounds he produced and one of his companions told me he was the pianist of the Grand Théâtre at Bordeaux. Unfortunately another *alerte* cut his efforts short and as after waiting the allotted time it was too late to open again, and as he left for the front that night, we had no more of his music.

The next night when I came down at seven I found Mrs S—, the lady with the transformation who infected her thumb and whom I dressed and undressed for a while, talking with two American soldiers from the automobile repair park here. I suggested that they stay a while and see the movies and soon discovered from their pronunciation that one of them came from Boston and the other from Virginia. They were surprised when I knew but it was so obvious I couldn't help it. The Virginian told me two coon stories that I enjoyed. Two niggers were discussing what branch of the service they would go into and one held out against aviation. "Why?"—"Once dat dere motah git ten thaousan' feet up in de sky it goin' tuh stall sure's yo'

born an' den dey sing aout: 'Niggah! git aout an' crank dat motah'. No suh! I ain' goin' intuh no aviation." Another coon didn't want the cavalry "cause when dey saound dat retreat I don' want no hoss in dey way!" Both valid reasons, I think.

Well, that night it was cloudy and the boches put off their visit so we got through the movies and then the men wanted to sing. Unfortunately there was no one who could play the piano so they had to sing without accompaniment. There's one boy, Beaufrère, with a strong face, big nose and glasses, who is the ring-leader but his songs are all pretty or amusing, nothing obscene. But of course among a motley ever-changing crowd there are all kinds of singers and one old man performed and pulled off something that was so dirty it wasn't even humorous. Needless to say I busied myself playing solitaire during it and didn't applaud. Soon after he volunteered again but as he approached the platform I beckoned to him and told him I wanted no more selections like the previous one, if he had no other kind in his repertoire he needn't sing at all. Oh, he assured me this one was "polie". But every time he got up I cringed. When he went back to the crowd the booby, instead of keeping my remonstrance to himself, told everyone what I had said and how he couldn't sing the last verse of this song because I had interfered. I felt like a criminal but otherwise it was an excellent thing.

The next night the boy with the strong face

wasn't there and no one had ambition enough to start anything so we sat and read or wrote.

Last night again we had a good time. After the movies the strong-faced boy asked if he could open the concert and I acquiesced gladly. When he came down from the platform I told him I was always glad to have him sing because his songs were pretty and had the superior virtue of being clean. He said he was glad I approved and saw no reason for singing any other kind. I asked him to suggest at closing time that they all join in "Madelon". He also must have passed along my judgment because after a small zouave—called "Zu Zu" by the admiring crowd, a generic name for the members of that regiment—had sung two awfully funny songs bordering on the unrespectable, he was called to the footlights again and finally said he'd give them "J'ai perdu la Lumière" (an eminently respectable song by a blind composer for blind soldiers). The theme is that this soldier doesn't think he should be pitied because in losing the light he has lost the sight of the atrocities of the war and he keeps the supreme vision of women and flowers. He will never see the roses fade whereas his less fortunate companions have fallen before seeing the result of their sacrifices. "Zu Zu" said he'd give them this selection not because he didn't know any more funny ones, on the contrary his head was full of them, but he didn't consider them fitting for the occasion. I was inwardly grateful but said nothing.

About five minutes of eleven, the closing time,

the strong faced boy suggested they join him in singing "Madelon", that he would sing the verses and they would join in the chorus as a finale, which they did with gusto and then began to pile out. There was no shaking of sleeping forms and turning them out in the cold at eleven o'clock at night when the *dortoirs* are all full. They all grabbed their musettes and knapsacks and went out humming "Madelon" and saluting me or saying "Good night". I wanted to thank my collaborator but he slipped out in the crowd before I could reach him.

I am enclosing "Madelon". When you play it try to see the men in blue piled into huge camions singing it at the top of their lungs or else the chasseurs, their knapsacks topped by Alpine stocks, swinging down the street, bound for the front but their hearts light at the thought of Madelon's charms. The other song, a plaintive, catchy melody, is sung a great deal at the Foyer.

It's quarter to seven now. I must tiptoe into the room as Mrs Laing is asleep, she goes on from midnight to seven A. M., and get tights, for it's cold at the Foyer, and a clean coif. So good-night.



Epernay  
April 29, 1918

ABOUT three o'clock last night an American soldier came in to ask if he could bring in some

negroes he was taking up to their regiment. Of course, I said: Yes, that the canteen was open all night and was for all soldiers who wanted to use it.

It's funny to me how hard our patrons find it to decide what to take. Two men came to me while I was serving coffee and asked for *deux jus*. I said: "*Noirs, ou au lait?*" After much discussion, one of them comes to a decision and the other says he'll take the same. And what is true of coffee is true of eggs.

The store-room here is overrun with rats. For weeks we had a dapper officer, specialist in destroying rats, hovering about the canteen, but still the families grew. Now we have a fox terrier whose favorite food is rats. He is valued at 500 francs, has a military *carpet*, and is mobilized as a ratter. Tonight when I came on duty I found him almost frozen in the store-room and have made a life-long friend by bringing him into the cellar. I suppose he's a good ratter for a dog, but he likes to insult them, so they hear him and make off.



*Extract from an article by René Bazin  
in the "Echo de Paris", March 17,  
1918, relating to the Cantine des Deux  
Drapeaux at Epernay*

Voici une ville moins grande. J'y retrouve la grande salle de distribution, moins décorée, mais

parfaitement nette et en ordre, le magasin, le dortoir ; une large charpente, que les ouvriers assemblent et montent en ce moment même, couvrira bientôt une salle de repos. Les Américaines de cette "Goutte de café" logent ensemble, dans une maison proche, dont j'ai vu la façade de brique, et les fenêtres grandes ouvertes de grand matin, et les rideaux de mousseline soulevés par le vent. Deux d'entre elles sont les soeurs d'un\* des personnages politiques les plus considérables des Etats-Unis. L'ainée—à moins que ce ne soit la cadette,—que je remerciais de ce qu'elle fait pour les notres, m'a répondu ce beau mot :

"Non, vous vous trompez : c'est un privilège d'assister les soldats qui donnent tout pour sauver le monde."

Nos alliées—comment dire autrement?—connaissent le fort et le faible du combattant de 1918 ; elles savent que l'uniforme bleu est celui de beaucoup d'hommes qui n'ont pas eu, comme l'un d'eux me le disait hier, "la discipline pour soeur de lait". Elles ont une autre idée, et plus juste, des avantages de la méthode et de la ponctualité. Le règlement, par exemple, porte que la distribution des tasses de café et de chocolat commencera à neuf heures. Récemment, quelques permissionnaires, sortant du train, vinrent s'asseoir autour des tables. Il était 8 h. 45. Poliment, l'un d'eux s'avança vers le comptoir ou se trouvait la directrice de la cantine, porta la main au casque et demanda :

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\* Mr Lansing, then Secretary of State.



"N'y aurait-il pas moyen, madame, de casser la croute?"

"Bientôt, à neuf heures.

"Pourquoi pas tout de suite?

"Parce que le service est organisé de cette façon-la.

"Voyons, madame, pour dix méchantes minutes. . . .

"Elles ne sont pas méchantes, elles seront même très bonnes si vous voulez m'écouter. Venez là tous!"

Elle parle admirablement le français, cette jeune et brune New-Yorkaise; et elle se mit à raconter des souvenirs de la vie industrielle aux Etats-Unis, à expliquer que les passe-droits, le manque de parole, les horloges en avance ou en retard, la vaine complaisance, si éloignée de la bonté, sont des improbités, des causes de ruine, obscures sans doute, mais certaines, même pour les cantines. Au moment où neuf heures sonnèrent, elle saisit le grand pichet fumant et, muette, obéissante à son tour, versa la première tasse à ses hôtes qui écoutaient encore.



Epernay  
April 27, 1918

Dear Knox:

FOR two days activities here recommenced when furloughs were granted, but now they've been stopped again the canteen is very dull. There

are only a few *évacués* from the hospitals, or some who have been here at frequent intervals during the last two weeks looking for their regiments. It's curious how easy it seems to be to lose a regiment! You might think it was a needle except that it always turns up.

We've had two dances recently. One evening after sleeping all day (I was on midnight duty), I came down to supper and heard one member of the family say: "There are nine more men from the R.A.F. coming to the party!" It seems that at the canteen some American Ambulance boys had begged so hard for a dance that it had been arranged and then in the afternoon these English aviators got added to the party. We emptied the rooms, concealed some appalling vases, took a plaster caste flute-player covered with dust upstairs, and cleared the floor for action. The Ambulance Service supplied the "rags" and it was amusing to watch the faces of our English cousins. But to dance with them was worse, such bobbing up and down, such pump-handle action! But we had an awfully good time and the English officers were very pleasant to the American privates. Of course they really couldn't have done differently, but it probably strained a bit.

Then a few days later as I was wearily standing by the chocolate pot thinking that the shift wouldn't change for half an hour, Miss Comstock tapped me on the arm, saying: "You're invited to dinner at the hotel. Aren't you thrilled?" It was these same Englishmen who

were asking us all, and as four of us just came off duty in time to put on clean cuffs and wash our hands, we all went in our uniforms. It really was a very pretty sight with the eight big white coifs streaming in the wind. When they turned the lights out in the hotel we came back here and got the Ambulance youths again, and again danced. Those have been our only two nights of frivolity. Once several weeks ago, four Ambulance boys from the Princeton Unit sauntered in here. They were *en repos* for a month and were spending the day here. They wanted to dance and we had just arranged it when a hurry call came for them to leave, *repos* ended and they were off for the Somme. It interested me to see their leisurely, a-bit-bored manner change to breathlessness as they hurried in to tell me that the party was off. It gives one a pang to hear that even a casual acquaintance is going up into that furnace, and I was relieved and pleased the other day to get a note from them saying that their division had done what to the English was impossible and they were proud to be with it.

When do you expect to get off? I wonder whether furloughs for the Americans have been stopped with those of the French?

Please send this letter on to the family as I have again cut my finger in the bread machine and writing is somewhat of an effort though I don't want mother to be without news of me for that reason.

I haven't yet decided what to do now that my time with the Red Cross is up. I may ask

for a transfer to another canteen, possibly to an American one where I can surely sleep nights instead of having the constant menace of an aerial visitation. I never thought I'd rejoice at a cloudy night and curse the brilliancy of the moon, but I've done many things over here I never thought to and the most striking instance is being house-keeper of the canteen, I who felt like a hero when at St Valéry I fried an egg and found it edible! Here I've even made an omelette, a plain one, and had it commented on as delicious, and the orderly says he always waits for salad until my *équipe* comes on!

It's just striking eleven so I must get a lamp and some hot water and wake my room-mate who goes on duty at midnight. This rooming with a person who is on a different shift isn't what it's cracked up to be.



Epernay  
May 11, 1918

Dear Mother:

I KNEW it was too long since I had written you but I didn't believe it was a whole month. I always have so much to tell you that I can't write in odd moments and I can't send cards to America from here. But I have communicated often with Knox and I've asked him to send on my letters and have tried to soothe my

conscience with that, though if you should treat me the same way I should be rending the heavens. But many things have prevented my writing. Time of course, then for many weeks we have had no gas as the coal gave out and the town suffered. I went one day for a shampoo and the man said that he could wash my hair but not dry it for lack of gas. Of course we could have used lamps here at the house had we been able to get oil to put in them. But that also gave out. The May allotment of sugar for the city arrived yesterday so you see we have been on the ragged edge for many necessities. At the canteen we had seven gas stoves, one to keep the chocolate hot, one for the coffee, two to make chocolate and two more, usually one to fry eggs and the other to melt the chocolate. We have had to find other means and the only one was the huge kitchen stove. One corner has since the memory of man been occupied by the huge marmite in which the coffee is made. The other end is now used for keeping the chocolate hot, hence only the small space in between remains to melt chocolate, melt beef fat into grease, keep the soup warm and fry eggs. As only two of these processes can take place at the same time I have to decide as house-keeper of my *équipe* which two it shall be. The cook grouses if I take off the meat, the men howl in front of the window if I substitute hard-boiled for fried eggs, the worker at the *repas* window complains if the soup is cold, and a hornets' nest descends about my ears, men, cashier, and chocolate window worker, if the chocolate gives out.

So you see my job is not an easy one keeping them all fed and happy.

Then another complication which made writing difficult was my pen. It dropped on the point so often that the points folded their arms and struck. I took it to the stationers who sell Waterman's and they shook their heads and said "twelve days." Twelve days without my only means of communication! Impossible! So I thought of the Beaufrère. He's in the *Génie* and what's the use of an engineer, particularly one who is a comfortable dog-like-in-expecting-no-return pal, if he can't fix a pen? So I gave it to him that evening and he fixed it. But of course it slipped off the tiled table-top and the following day he fixed it again but it worked with such difficulty that I could write only the shortest notes. Knox came in for some of them as an indirect way of writing to you.

Perhaps you wonder who the Beaufrère is. I must have written you, when I was on the evening Foyer, of a boy with a big nose who wore glasses, who came each evening to the Foyer. The evening worker goes on there at seven. The movie begins very shortly and lasts until about nine. The Foyer doesn't close until eleven and the form of amusement easiest for distracting such a gang of men is singing, and of course singing by volunteers in the audience. There's a large element of chance in this as the crowds change every night and one doesn't know the singers and as the French tell all they know on every subject, sometimes it's embarrassing; some-



times one even has to stop the singer, and sometimes the worker doesn't catch the subtleties because usually the worst songs sound harmless and are made monstrous by this subtle intonation which attaches double meanings to almost everything. Often I've seen the ladies smile serenely and at the end applaud a song while I was busily reading a newspaper or doing a picture-puzzle so as to seem not to be paying attention. I remember once Emma Lansing was running the singing and a man was apparently holding forth on ancient Gaul. She asked what the song was and I told her as I thought correctly, but you soon get to know by instinct the character of the ditty by the kind of laugh it draws, and by the glances cast in your direction and by the sort of unconscious bristling of a friend in *horizon bleu* who may be sitting near you. And I soon gathered from the atmosphere that Ancient Gaul was a camouflage and Emma stopped the song.

Well, to get back. The first night I was on the evening Foyer I noticed this large-nosed good-faced boy sang several times and that his songs were always pretty and amusing and above question. The next night he reappeared and started the singing and the tone is usually set by the first song. When he came off the platform I beckoned to him and told him I enjoyed his songs because their tone was always decent and he thanked me for my appreciation and said he saw no reason why they should be otherwise, particularly with ladies present. Then I suggested that

he help me close at eleven by singing "Madelon" and getting the men to join in chorus, then they would be turned out into the cold night with at least a song on their lips. From then on he gradually drifted into the post of *régisseur des concerts au Foyer*. He'd move through the crowd urging volunteers to come up, several times a man would announce a title and I'd hear his deep southern accents ringing out from some corner: "*Arrête! Arrête!*" The performer would sort of grin as though he thought it a joke and the Beaufrère would rise up in the crowd, with a look of determination on his face and the open mouth of the singer would close, a questioning look come on his face and: "*Sans blague?*"—"*Oui, sans blague!*" and a change of selection. Of course I was pleased and was always ready in case the necessity had arisen to back up the censor's verdict because the men wouldn't have refused to comply with my decisions. But, and here's the great difficulty, you can't be too strict because then no one will sing and the men won't come. Also there were some songs that were just on the border that really were awfully funny and had catching tunes. There's one I remember which is to the effect that the audience will probably not be interested but allow me to present myself. Under this "*uniforme de piou-piou*" is concealed something other than an ordinary "*poussecaillou*," in fact "*J'suis l'Amour, j'suis l'Amour en personne*". I fly like a butterfly around house-maids and nurses and if a young girl wants to have a good time I send an arrow

softly and accurately into her heart and everyone calls me her "*petit Cupidon.*" One day I took a walk in the park with a girl and as it was awfully hot she took off her hat and skirt and waist and I not to be outdone followed suit, but just then a policeman came along and threatened to serve me a "*procès-verbal*" but I told him it was none of his business: "*J'suis l'Amour, j'suis l'Amour en personne, je voltige comme un gai papillon, tout autour des nous-nous et des bonnes, qui m'appellent leur petit Cupidon.*" After all it is no business of a policeman's to try and make Cupid wear more than a quiver of arrows. It's like Anthony Comstock trying to drape "September Morn." And to my thinking, possibly perverted by over a year now among the French soldiers, the song, though on the border, does just slip under the wire. The trouble is though that if this song gets by some one else may want to go it one better and sing a song that is one too many. But then there are also shades of "one-too-manyness" and sometimes I'd pass the song without approval and sometimes the *régisseur* would stop it. My service there though was appreciated because many of the men in the same section as the Beaufrère said they'd never had a directrice like me, the Beaufrère will lean sadly on the *guichet* during my leisure moments and say: "*Ah Miss, ce service ne vous va pas!*"—"Pourquoi"?—"Au Foyer où vous manquez c'est là que vous appartenez." Then when he left to replace a part of his regiment that was to come to Magenta, the town across the river, he wrote

and told me he was sending one of his pals who could sing to take his place at the Foyer and ended with: "*Prêtez-lui votre concours comme vous l'avez fait pour moi, pourqu'il aie du succès.*"

That's *one* Beaufrère, and hardly a day goes by that he doesn't come to the canteen choosing the moments when I'm on duty. To show you what a reliable decent sort he is, the father of one of our dishwashers, a pretty girl of about eighteen, asked this Beaufrère if he would escort his daughter home each night, her service ending that week at eleven o'clock, as I believe that one night she had been shot at. So every night at eleven, I was then on the 7 P. M. to midnight duty, he would take Carmen and Eugénie home (she's another cook down there about 18, bright eyes, always on the job and thinks ahead) and then come back and chat with me until midnight. "Coquetting with the cooks", you may say, but then I'm now a cook myself.

A night or two after I got to know this Beaufrère one of his pals came to sing and stayed to chat and they called each other "Beaufrère" but neither had the appearance of a married man, though you can't of course always tell, and I wondered. The next day the explanation came. Each had discovered that the other had a sister, though the ladies were unknown, and in a moment of jest had proposed that after the war each should marry the other's sister. Hence on the spot they became *Beaufrères*. I call them "Monsieur le Beaufrère Lutrau" or "Molinier"

as the case may be. The second one is to me much more interesting. In the first place he is always neat, shaven, and toothbrushed, which the first isn't. Either would do anything for me though the first would be more aggressively protective like a police dog, whereas the second would come leaping into the breach if called. But he's more interesting and he's extremely amusing, his language is full of vivid pictures, phrases turned unexpectedly, and he has a lovely singing voice. He's really more musical, turning toward "Manon's Rève", "Toreador", "Rigoletto", and doing the popular stuff too, even slightly shady songs. I really miss him, whereas I got along happily without the other one, though I treat them exactly alike. However, this one and I leagued together to get the first Beaufrère to brush his teeth, which he still does except when he forgets. The police-dog Beaufrère was studying to be an engineer when he was called to the colors, whereas the interesting one, who comes from Aiguesmortes but hasn't the least southern accent, left school at the age of twelve to go into his father's boat-building *usine*. By trade then he is a "*tourneur de bois*" now located in the *Génie*.

I remember well one night when I was on duty from midnight to 7 A. M. that to my surprise I found them in the canteen on my arrival. When the change of shift had taken place and I had taken over the kitchen (*repas-quichet*) they came and camped outside and with tears in their eyes almost, told me that they were going to



leave, one going to Châlons to build an *abri* in cement and the other down the Marne to work the boat-bridge so that boats could pass. I was sorry because of course you can't be as friendly with one French soldier as you can with two, and the interesting Beaufrère left later. However one day unexpectedly the police-dog Beaufrère was returned to town and he's working heaven and earth to get the other one here too, even organized a concert for the benefit of the *blessés* with the idea that he could get his "loot" to send for the other Beaufrère to help it along. However, that part isn't succeeding, though the concert will take place after I'm gone, I believe.

I hope to get away the 15th. I signed for only three months and they are up the 15th. Under normal conditions I should just stay on and await my turn for a furlough, but the conditions are somewhat abnormal. In the first place the directrice is a cliquy lady and can manage to arrange almost anything for the people at the other house, but unfortunately in that respect—though most fortunately in others—I don't live in that house. I hadn't been here two weeks before I lost two large fillings. As I had just arrived I didn't want to ask to go back to Paris to have my teeth filled and didn't feel that I could ask to go and see Knox. However, when I had been here nearly two months I had a *fil-leul* I had never seen who was in Paris going shortly to return to Salonika and wanted to see me first. I thought I could kill three birds with the same stone then and be gone not more than four days.



I asked for my teeth and Knox, explaining how long it was since I'd seen him—he had suggested I come and stay with the Commandant. The lady listened in a distraught way and although she was managing to fix it up for the people at the other house to get to Paris for from one to six days she couldn't do anything for me. That's what makes us all so blooming sore at this house. The other day we got so mad that it took two bottles of Champagne to drown our anger. Any tidbits that come along, trips to interesting places with the Commandant, are all enjoyed by the other house. We don't want to live over there, we don't want to be in the same house with some of those people, but we all feel that the directrice ought to give all her workers the same chance to see things, have a system, take one group one week and others the next, but not the same group every time. Well, she would do nothing to help me see Knox or get my teeth filled. I don't see that it's up to me to stay on to help her out when my time is up even though I know that about eight people are leaving for good or for furlough in the course of the same week, and even though I am considering staying on with the organization. The head of the cantine personnel has written to say she doesn't want to lose "as good a worker" as I am but I know that's just "bull" because she can't send any new workers into the War Zone and as she's desperately in need of them, she wants to be able to count on me. I haven't decided anything. I'm waiting to see Knox and find out what he will do. If I ask for

a transfer I may get a directrice who has the same or worse faults, and I may not get the creature comforts that we have here, and I certainly should never find a second Miss Pond who is the head of this house and a wonder, always cheerful, tactful and sympathetic and game for anything. Then again I might get something better. One knows what one's leaving but not what one's getting into and unless it looks as though I could do better I shall stay on with the organization and come back here.

My "*ordre de mission*" to go to Paris on permission has come and had to be sent to a nearby town for the visa of the Commandant. That was several days ago and I firmly expect to get away on the 15th. I shall go to Paris and the next day or the day after go to Blois for Knox's birthday. I shan't stay there long enough to bore him and then shall come back to Paris for my teeth which will be filled free of charge by the dental staff of the American Ambulance who have their mornings retained by the Red Cross for the use of American war workers. Then when my ten days' leave is up I shall know what to do.

My second letter of credit is about to expire and I had Morgan-Harjes send it to London to be renewed so I still have some money to live on. I feel as though I had been economizing the last three months as my expenses have been 9:50 francs a day and I have bought nothing but tobacco to send to my *filleuls* who cry for it. Oh yes, I've bought some popular music for myself and for the Foyer, some writing pads, three hem-

stitched veils for duty at the canteen, six hand and bath towels and two dark blue butchers' aprons to keep my uniforms clean. And three times, I think possibly four, I've set up the champagne. So you see my purchases have not been excessive in three months.

I get to work at 7 A. M. and from then until about 8 there is nothing to do but keep out of the way of the water that the cooks are swishing about the floor. But after that I'm on the constant run until one o'clock when the *équipe* changes. My special orderly is the "special orderly" of every morning house-keeper because she has to get out the supplies for the day from the *cantine-magasin* and *cave*, and this orderly has that as his particular job, also weighing and counting any merchandise that comes in, and the "swell swill", as it's called, that goes out. He weighs and she checks up so they spend much of the morning together. He is delegated to the auxiliary service as the father of four children and he is certainly a ray of sunshine, always smiling, good-natured, willing and a tower of strength. Well, he said this morning at twelve when I was cutting my twenty-fifth loaf of bread and had an hour more of steady jump before me and he was about to sit down to lunch: "*Je n'ai pas même eu le temps de rouler plus d'une cigarette ce matin!*" I answered: "*Oui, mais Julien, moi je n'ai même pas eu le temps d'en rouler une!*" I jolly them all more or less and my favorite little Eugénie who makes the coffee and chocolate told me that she preferred to work

under me and Mrs Laing because I let them do their work their own way. Well, I figure that it's their work to do, and if they prefer to do it their way why shouldn't they, provided they get it done? I know I should hate to have any one butt into my work and tell me how to do it. And it's funny almost everyone at the chocolate window, for instance, does her work differently. I found it quicker when there were crowds, to put the bowls up on the tiled slab from which the men take them and fill them there, filling say six bowls of coffee at once and then possibly as many chocolate. Others fill the bowls on the table, which is lower so they don't have to lift the pitchers so high, and then they lift the bowls individually onto the tiled slab. When the coffee or chocolate is very hot you stand a good chance that way of burning your fingers. I tried it both ways and stuck to the quickest. So I feel with the cooks that they've tried doing their work and know best how they wish to do it.

You know how much of a cook I am, but you don't know what an expert I am at frying eggs. A portion is two eggs, and when you have three men at the window each hoping to carry away three portions and only eight tins to cook in you can't let each man have a tin plate. Hence the eggs must be turned out onto a china one. Also if you have one burner on which to cook six portions you've got somehow to keep the other five warm while you're cooking the sixth. My eggs usually turn out onto the plate a perfect white round, crisp at the edges with two round

unbroken golden yolks in the middle. As it happened so often I didn't think anything of it until Miss Goodrich exclaimed in amazement that she couldn't do it and watched me carefully. She tried, and I got wise to her trouble; she tried to melt the grease at the same time she cooked the eggs. Of course they stuck to the pan. I told her to have her grease hot and then put the eggs in. I know the dangers of too hot grease because once it caught on fire when I was cooking and the only fluid I had at hand was the soup so I put a spoonful of that on the tin and extinguished the flame.

Miss MacMurray came onto my *équipe* this last week. You can't order or take orders from a person who is your equal, possibly your junior, with no more experience than you, particularly if you are both volunteers and have never *had* to work, so I knew it would be a question of suggesting instead of ordering, to which she tumbled immediately. I suggested she fry the eggs and the first shot out of the box the grease caught on fire. I'd been there so I knew what to do but she just pulled the plate away from the fire and looked helpless. I didn't want to interfere so I waited a moment but as she didn't move and I was afraid the solder would melt, I dipped a bit of the water that was heating for the chocolate onto the tin. Then so she wouldn't feel like too much of an ass I told her I'd just done the same thing and put the flames out with soup. She couldn't get sore at that and she didn't and we get along beautifully.

Here's another bit of strategy by Miss E. She knows that Miss MacMurray would like the experience of being house-keeper so that she could talk up the canteens when she gets home and she's leaving here for good on the 16th, and yet she keeps me on as house-keeper and before me Miss MacMurray was on Mrs Laing's *équipe* although Mrs Laing had been at it over a month and so have I. So I initiate her into as much of it as possible and even the other day when she should have been cleaning in the Salle I sent her down to the station because we heard there were some boche prisoners there and she hadn't seen any. Between you and me, I think that she's surprised when I have the whip-hand, that I don't use it. But gee whiz! what's the use. You've shown me that people who don't bear grudges are much the pleasantest to get on with. Have it out and get it over is my idea.

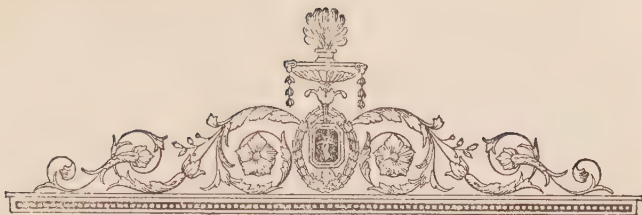
I really must stop now although I've got heaps more to say. How I'd like to drop in on you! And I shall be so glad to see Knox and talk about you and Dad and the house and dogs! Seems as though I can hardly wait.

Our May sugar has come. 500 grams each, just one pound!



BETWEEN JOBS





## *Between Jobs*

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Paris  
May 17, 1918

I'm loose again and at large.

Mrs Vanderbilt seems to like me. She's always most pleasant and cordial when I see her. I feel as though I could tell her what I think instead of handling her with white kid gloves as you usually have to handle a boss. She greeted me with a broad smile and said: "Well, Miss Hardon, what have you been doing to make yourself famous at Epernay?"—"What do you mean?"—"I've had a snappy letter from Miss E. about you: 'excellent worker, very efficient,' but she didn't like the way you left." My answer was that my time was up, that I needed to see a dentist, for I had lost two fillings more than a month ago, and Miss E. had found it impossible to let me go to Paris for that purpose, that without a *permis de départ* I could not travel, and that except with Miss E.'s consent I could not get a *permis de départ* until my time was up. Mrs Vanderbilt was very sympathetic and

interested. Somehow she makes me feel as though I were a friend and not a subordinate.

She proposes to send me to an American canteen because the work for our boys is now of most importance. I told her that I should enjoy it but that, as I could speak French, I felt that I ought to work for the *poilus*. She said she knew I spoke it remarkably well, but she was about to establish a new canteen for American soldiers and meant to take Miss Pond away from Epernay and make her directress and send me with her. So that's the outlook now.



Blois  
May 22, 1918

I'M here on a visit to our son and brother. He showed me the cathedral and the residence of our friend Francis I and other objects of interest with side remarks such as: "We closed eleven buvettes because they were selling alcohol to the boys", or: "We're trying to get the fellow who has the cocaine."—"Cocaine?"—"Yes, this is a great place for cocaine."

The brother ate a hasty meal of omelette, fried potatoes, chocolate, asparagus and cheese and then departed in a waiting car with other dignitaries, French and American, for a "joint" where a raid was to be "pulled off." It seems that some of the boys had been selling army food, the

powers had long suspected it and were about to catch the purchaser red-handed. They had sent some dummies down to make a sale and were to appear at the crucial moment. As he drove off I went upstairs to dress for dinner. He was back in less than twenty minutes, saying that the enterprise had been highly successful. The goods were all laid out on the table, and the price arranged, twenty cents for canned beef and five for bread. "When we blew in the buyer had the surprise of his life. We took him along to the jail and he'll be tried in the morning. The man asked to send word to his family to say he should not be at home early, but nothing about his spending the night out."

I had to coach our brother in some of the current slang. Shirt is *lignette*, coffee, *jus*, bread, *brich-ton*, legs, *furnerous*. "*J'ai les furnerous en fromage*," as one of the *Beaufrères* said to me after he had walked the fifty kilometers from Châlons to Epernay. He was talking with me one night at my *guichet* and asked me the time. It was ten minutes to eleven but, having been tipped off, I answered: "*Onze plombes moins dix broquilles*." An uninitiated *poilu* was standing by and I thought he'd need first aid he howled so at my answer.

At the restaurants here they serve no butter, milk nor sugar with breakfast and demand a bread card for bread.

The plate glass windows of the shops have mostly large strips of paper glued to them to prevent fragments from flying in case a bomb

falls near by. Many people have left Paris in fear of bombardment, at least that is what I am told and I think it must be true, for passing through the Place Vendôme and the Rue de la Paix the other evening hardly a soul was to be seen. The pillar in the Place is banked high with sandbags. So, too, the bas-relief of the Victory on the Arc de Triomphe. The roof of the Eastman Kodak Company on the Place Vendôme was evidently hit by something, for it is merely a charred ruin. I heard the *alerte* for an air raid the other night, but after the real thrill at Epernay the Paris visitations leave me cold.



Blois  
May 23rd, 1918

I WONDER if you have ever been in Blois. I came down on furlough after hearing from Knox that it would be all right. He met me at the station, had a room reserved for me at the hotel and while I rumbled along in the hotel bus he came beside it on his bicycle.

He looks very handsome in his uniform and introduces me to everyone. "Mac, let me introduce you to my sister." It amuses me.

The first night he brought his particular friend to dinner, a very attractive lieutenant, and I was amused to hear him ask his friend to show me the picture of his charming wife and say at



the same time: "If I'd seen her first Blank wouldn't have had a chance."

You probably know Blois and recognize the first post-card as the view of the chateau from the street. No. 2 is the view as you enter it. This side is pink brick with white stone decorations, and the statue is Louis XII. His emblem, the porcupine with a crown standing on the bristles, is everywhere, also the ermine of Anne of Brittany and the swan pierced to the heart by an arrow, the emblem of Claude, wife of Francis I. I wonder if the arrow wasn't Diane de Poitiers!

Knox has his office about at the foot of the letter L in the post cards I send. When he talked about "my office" I thought it was someone else's where he had desk room, but not at all, his name is on the door, and at the foot of the stairs leading to it is a large placard announcing the fact. As you probably know, he is attached here as liaison officer. He anticipates being moved to Paris shortly, is in fact awaiting orders to that effect daily. There he will follow a special training in anti-spy detection, then go to Havre first, then Marseilles, and eventually have a post of his own. At least that's what he hopes. It ought to lead to the double-hurdle, as a captain's insignia is called.

No. 3 is what you see as you come in the gate, the triumphal stair of Francis I. That portion of the building is all white with Francis' salamander in relief everywhere. Beyond it is the newest portion built by Gaston d'Orléans. It's good late renaissance but as the guide says, it's

fortunate he died when he did, for he planned to demolish the whole of the older part and rebuild to suit himself. It wouldn't have been bad but the other is more interesting and has some glorious mantels. Also the *cabinet de travail* of Catharine de Médicis where she had concealed in the wainscotting secret cupboards to hide her poison potions.

No. 4 is the same stairway looking the other way and showing between Francis' creation and Louis' the oldest part, which consists only of the throne-room where they all held their special audiences. It has two beautiful tapestries, really exquisite in their soft colorings.

I was interested on coming into this court to see an American soldier, rifle in his hand, on guard and the guide explained that it was because there were military offices there. I know better and when the war's over I'll tell you.

I don't understand what's keeping Knox as it's eight o'clock and he was to eat with me but as I'm getting hungry I'll eat alone. His bicycle was taken when he went up to the *caserne* to "retreat" and he waited for it to be returned. Perhaps he's still waiting. No, he came in at ten and told me business had caught him just as he was getting away.

No. 5 is the kind of mantels and doors that Francis I could afford. They are all painted and really are wonders. Also tiled floors in blues and yellows! They must have been cold but the guide suggested that they had rugs. I asked where the furniture was and he said the kings

took it along from palace to palace as they moved. Poor things, not to be able to have two sets! Think of the procession of vans needed to transport it.

I am writing you a long letter of my experiences with Knox but shan't mail it for sometime so that anything of importance as military information, in case there's any, will be too stale to be dangerous. However, you'll be able to hitch it into this account.



Blois  
May 23, 1918

A PACKAGE was just sent up to my room inscribed in Dad's perfect style so I suppose I really should thank him, but somehow the articles don't announce his workmanship. They are three chemises and I don't know when anything has seemed so welcome. I know when I was inspecting my wardrobe preparatory to coming down here, I scanned with dismay my chemises and wondered how long they would hold out. I have sewed (both verbs) them pretty liberally all over and the remnants are mere fragments. Thank Dad, please, for his part whether making, inspecting, censoring or shipping. When in the winter I thought I was going home I ordered some embroidered ones but they haven't come yet because, though made in Paris, they are embroi-

dered elsewhere and what with the bombardment and the movement of troops they haven't had train room to deliver them. That was nearly six months ago! and at that time I didn't expect these would last so long. This is a lengthy discourse on an article of apparel but you see how important it is and how welcome is this addition.

Knox was to come again this morning but he hasn't shown up. He is a very busy boy as liaison officer and all matters concerning the two armies in this place pass through his hands. Tonight he goes on guard duty at the *caserne* for 24 hours but thinks he may be let off as he is working on an important "case" which requires many odd moments. He holds down his desk chair 9—11 and 3—5 but in the two days I've been here he hasn't once been able to have a leisurely meal with me at the hotel. He dashes in and asks me to eat at the tea-house with him because there he can be served immediately and he has something "on" in half an hour. It's a good meal though, omelette, potatoes, asparagus, chocolate, cheese and though his face is round and full and sunburnt, he isn't fleshy. His walk reminds me of Dad, you could tell it miles away. The cuffs of a light blue linen shirt show below his coat sleeves. It's the only outlet he has for his taste in dress. When you think of the gorgeous combination of shirt, tie and socks that he used to affect, this restriction must be painful. He wears a gold wrist-watch, a "cheap little thing", and on the other wrist his silver identity disk. In his breast pocket is the gold cigarette

case that he bought with his first earnings "on the street." The officer's cap came from Hoare and bears the label. All told he presents the unostentatious air of a plutocrat.

Yesterday he dragged me away from the French girls to introduce me to the Marquise de Ponthouan. I wonder if he thinks I give him an air of respectability or what, because this was totally unnecessary, the marquise not knowing I was there. Occasionally he lets fall bits like: "I spoke to the head of our police yesterday about you so you'll have no trouble when you see him", and seemed somewhat abashed when I told him I didn't come under that control. He'll be here in a minute now so I must stop.



Blois  
May 27, 1918

WITH the French girls I attended retreat day before yesterday. It's the regular ceremony of lowering the flag at sun-down. It involves much bugling, marching of the band, inspecting the rifles and equipment of the new guard, and finally the "Marseillaise" and the "Star Spangled Banner". The American commander found that so many of the French attended the ceremony that it occurred to him that it would enhance good feeling if a French flag were carried on the parade ground. So he got a beauty of heavy

taffeta with gold fringe and the French commander detaches four men to go up daily to the *caserne* for retreat and carry it. So the band plays not only the "Star Spangled Banner" as the flag is lowered, but precedes it with the "Marseillaise." The lowering of the flags is very impressive. The men stand at attention and the officers salute. With us at the window overlooking the scene were three officers who stood rigidly at attention, for an "uncovered" officer does not salute.

When the ceremony was over the adjutant asked us to look at the flags and ushered us to the commanding officer's bureau where we were cordially received by the slender, erect, white-haired captain who even at a distance as we saw him on the parade ground seemed to ooze friendliness. While we looked at the flags which were unrolled for us two officers came in on business, but the captain asked them to wait and I felt as though the business of the whole army was being held up for us. He was very courteous to us and fairly beamed when the adjutant said: "This is Lieutenant Hardon's sister."

The brother introduces every officer he sees, dragging some from their desks and saying: "I want you to meet my sister." He's passed no comment on my raiment. I wear my black suit in the day time and change to a mouse-colored *charmeuse* that Marindaz made for me last summer. Mrs Laing, my ex-roommate, calls it a simple little Quaker costume.



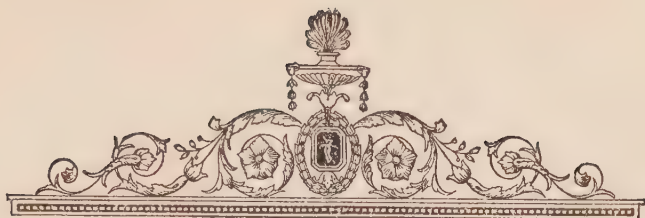
Yesterday we lunched at the creamery, I, the brother, and two other officers who are working with him on the "case." We had omelette, potatoes, peas, chocolate and cheese. The proprietress brought in a little covered dish which contained butter, *défendu*, and coaxed us to eat oranges with sugar, also *défendu*. Then the brother and the officers left to work on their "case." In the afternoon I was walking with the French girls when we saw one of the brother's best friends in the creamery as we passed and then met the brother on the street. I hailed him and he suggested that we join the friend, but first he would go into the hotel a moment. He came running out at once, told the friend he needed him at once and they both disappeared. Later he came in radiant, saying he'd bagged big game. He was tired and left me saying he was going right to bed.

To-day at retreat I sat in a chair and held court. When we left the major took me in his car to the château where the brother has his office and sleeping quarters. He said he thought the brother was bored with his work and wanted a change, but that it required an officer with tact and he was doing it well and he shouldn't let him go, certainly not before he got some one who could replace him.



AT BOURGES





## *At Bourges*

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Bourges  
June 9, 1918

I ARRIVED yesterday and have a room over a florist's at 40 francs a month and my meals at the canteen at 3 francs a day. As I get 360 francs a month from the Red Cross I shall win money if I stay here long enough.

Yesterday afternoon a train of negroes went through and we gave them coffee. I noticed that they gave coins unasked to refugee children in a train alongside and one of them shed a gold ring into the outstretched palm of a woman. As their train pulled out they shook hands with us and they felt like monkeys' paws. I never anticipated shaking hands with a gang of American negroes, but there was no question of wishing or not to do so.

This canteen is a toy. They plan for only 15 meals a day including those of the workers, and Miss Pond has shifted the accounts onto me.

There's a French worker with us, and last night at 9:30 some French soldiers came in ask-

ing for food. Their compatriot told them the canteen was closed, although they could see Americans eating inside. Naturally they expostulated, and she snapped back with: "What did you do before the canteen was here?" A soldier started to reply, but got only so far as to open his mouth. Then he took a long breath and said: "*Merci!*" and left. Imagine Epernay ever being closed when a hungry man asked for food! We'd slave our hands off so as to have food ready-cooked and never have to refuse any soldier. Miss Pond and I shook our heads and made a mental resolution.

I shan't write to Mrs Vanderbilt until I've tried this out, and then it will be a breezy letter as that's our basis and the reason she likes me.



Bourges  
June 13, 1918

DOUBTLESS you received my letter from Paris telling you that Knox called me up and told me that he was on his way to Havre for three weeks' training in the Intelligence Department and would then have a post of his own.

The canteen at Epernay has been closed and all the workers are gone except Miss E.'s chosen band, who are doing hospital work.

Last night one of our customers gave me a ten-centime tip. It goes into the box for *blessés*.



We get many such tips. One soldier from Montana gave us all his loose change when he found that I had been in his native state. It's useless to argue with them. Most of them have more money than they know what to do with. One boy said to me: "You don't know, lady, what it means to us fellows to talk to a real American girl."

When an American troop train comes in a bell rings in the canteen and we rush out onto the platform with huge pails of *café-au-lait*. I go along the platform calling out: "Coffee! who'll have coffee?" The boys swarm around like flies in a sugar bowl. Usually one of them will say: "I haven't heard a woman talk real American in so long I've got to have a drink just to hear her speak." They don't push or yell: "I'm next!" but surround me with cups extended and I pour as rapidly as I can. Sometimes the coffee gives out before all are filled, but there's never a murmur of complaint.

This morning the train was long and was to stay half an hour. When I got to the platform many boys were standing at the doors. One youth called to me and with a suppressed grin showing about his mouth said there was a sick fellow in there and would I take him some coffee. Of course, I knew this was mere camouflage for laziness and asked what ailed the youth. At that a howl of laughter went up from the group: "She's got your number, Hank!"

This train was passenger cars, but often it's 8-chevaux-40 hommes cars and when the train starts up many of the boys are still getting

coffee and calmly run along beside the train.

Many of the soldiers call me "Sister", while the officers usually address me as "Ma'am." The world seems to be upside down.

The military police left to-day—had orders to close their shop. We were wondering how we'd manage to carry the heavy pails of coffee to the trains. And they were handy for repairs at the canteen. But now we hear that a new set is on the way. There are no American troops stationed here except those few military police, so our chief work is serving the trains and serving coffee or chocolate to French soldiers. We can't give them anything to eat, and it hurts to have to tell a Frenchman this when he sees an American carrying off a plate of hot fried eggs.

I have to stop, for it's late and to-morrow I'm on from 7 to 3.



Bourges  
June 14, 1918

I'M sitting in my tiny room at the florist's. My window looks onto the garden which extends as far as the eye can reach. They've just finished watering and the smell of the wet earth comes up to me. Nasturtiums and rambler roses are the chief flowers now with a few stray fuchsias. They always suggest Grandma's place to me. You remember she used to have them in those large jars on the verandah.

There's a small grandchild in this family, very pretty but spoiled and stubborn as a mule. The day I arrived I gave her one of those sticks of candy I brought from Paris. They're scarce and very precious. Ginette was at that moment clinging to her mother's neck but she loosened one hand and took a firm grip on the candy. Of course grandmother and mother said: "What do you say to the lady?" and she answered glibly: "I say nothing." When I come in from the canteen so weary that I drop onto the first thing in sight, mother asks her to say: "Bonjour, Madame!" and the kid makes no answer. For some reason it makes me think of the time when you took me down that long flight of stairs at Grandma's and into the empty dining room and made me go from chair to chair, saying: "How do you do?" to an imaginary uncle or aunt and all the others who used to gather at the Sunday dinners, so that I'd not refuse to be polite the next time the function came off. You were dead right but there were storms you had to go through. It's funny the childhood scenes that come to one's mind.



Bourges,  
June 16, 1918

I SUPPOSE the hardest work I have here is serving the trains. For instance, last night just as my eight hour shift was almost up at 11 o'clock,

a lieutenant came into the canteen to announce that he was going to bring in his company for hot drinks. That didn't worry us a bit but soon after he came back saying the train would pull out in seven minutes so he didn't have time for his men to come in. It isn't human to let your own countrymen go through without a drop of cheer so I filled a huge can of coffee and dashed onto the platform. Pitch dark and locomotives shrieking! I saw some service hats and dashed up to the wearers asking if they were the company I was looking for.—“No ma'am, we've been in and had some coffee”.—“Well where are the others?”—They didn't know. I found a French employee and he told me, so I climbed through two trains and dashed up the platform as my seven minutes were rapidly passing. I found the train and the men poured out holding cups all around me. I couldn't really see, but one man assured me that his cup was heavier than when he offered it to me so I knew I was getting some of the coffee on the way to the place where it would do good. Then the lieutenant came along and told me that if I thought I was giving drink to his men I was making a mistake, but he supposed they all needed it just as much, so I suggested he dash back to the canteen and ask the new shift to bring more. When he'd gone accepting pleasantly my suggestion, I asked the men if they didn't like the way I'd ordered their “loot” around and they chuckled. Of course my can didn't hold nearly enough and there was a train between me and the platform. This idea

of climbing through a train when you don't know how long it's going to stay put doesn't please me too much, as I don't want to land miles down the track with no way to get back. There were some Americans on the train, however, so I banged on the door, getting them to open both sides so I could dash through, because these trains get under way slowly. They said they wouldn't mind a bit if I got caught on the train. Of course the step was so high I couldn't reach it but I hardly had time to try as two strong arms lifted me right into the train and lowered me on the other side. There the door had been locked and the "loot" was pacing up and down like a caged lion trying to get out to the canteen. I led him through the French infirmary and we got more coffee and started back. Again I had to go through the trains with the same success and managed to get back in time to give more coffee before the train pulled out. One man was running with a full cup to his compartment and as he went by called out: "Are you an American?"—"Yes, what can I do for you?"—"Just shake hands." Of course I did, poor fellow, he's far from home and under more trying circumstances than I, for I'm my own mistress, and can speak the language, whereas probably he can't.

Just before I went out to serve that train I had been talking to a shift of engineers, the locomotive driver and the mechanic. One of them was telling me what he thought of the Red Cross and the Y.M.C.A. He said the R.C. could have

his money every time. That at home he had belonged to the Y. for nine years, but never again. He said it wasn't the organization he was quarreling with; it had done and was doing fine work, as we all know, but an organization that has the money back of it that that one has!— Well, for instance, a bar of chocolate that it can buy from the commissary for 14 cents it charges the men 32 cents for. Bull Durham that it gets for 3 cents it charges 8 cents for, etc. Now the R.C. runs for a loss. I know that, for I'm doing the accounts of this canteen. Eggs for instance at wholesale price cost 6 cents a piece. When we serve two fried eggs we charge 12 cents, which covers just the price of the eggs, but not the butter or grease to cook it, nor the coal. The men know that, too, and that's why this engineer had such praise for the R.C. But when you think of the sacrifices some people are making at home just to give a quarter to the R.C. to make the boys over here more comfortable, it seems only right to use that money for the purpose for which it is meant instead of hoarding it and covering expenses from the boys' pockets.

You knew doubtless that I was at a French canteen, or rather a R.C. canteen for the French soldiers, near the front. Before this last advance my furlough came along and I left for Paris and to see my brother. By that time the Germans had got to within 6 miles of the canteen, it had been closed and the town was experiencing all kinds of expert German hate from cannon and aeroplane. We had had many noc-



turnal visitations and spent many nights in the cellar while cannons—anti-aircraft—and bombs and machine-guns roared around us, making the house shake. Each time we expected to find a large hole in our back-yard but each time it was the other fellow that got it. But now that the guns can reach the town it is beginning to look like many others that the Germans have baptized.



Bourges  
June 17, 1918

I HAD to stop as my water boiled and I was kept pretty busy making sandwiches and doing the thousand and one odd jobs that turn up, cleaning the tables (for there aren't many bowls of coffee or chocolate that don't leave their mark on the blue and white checked linoleum and I know I'd rather eat on a clean table, so doubtless the boys would), putting away the china, cutting bread, and clearing up generally. You know that in France food cards have been issued. You go to the town hall, give your name, age, sex and the kind of work you are doing and they ration you accordingly. For instance, a man who does hard physical work such as working a farm gets a ticket marked T. which entitles him to the highest rations, 400 grammes (not quite a pound) of bread a day. Women who do the hard work get 300 grammes, children 200 grammes,

older people, men and women, 300 grammes. This ticket is for everything, bread, sugar, meat, gasoline, coal, etc. When you go to a butcher's you have to show this card and they sell you the amount to which you are entitled. At a restaurant you can't get bread with your meal unless you have a bread ticket, that's the rule, but until I got my ticket I was refused bread only once, and that was on the train coming down here from Paris. But as we eat at the canteen we don't need these tickets. However, to be on the safe side the day I arrived here I went to the town hall and was immediately pushed in ahead of the waiting throng and given a worker's ticket marked T. If I had 400 grammes of bread I shouldn't know what to do with it and as the family of five where I live get all told only 1500 grammes a day, and the man is an aged florist who works out in the garden from early dawn to dewy eve, I turned over my tickets to them with the provision that when I was on the afternoon shift at the canteen I was to have breakfast here. They fell on my neck and almost wept with joy. And just now I'm thinking that doubtless the Lord might have made a better berry than a strawberry, but doubtless also he did not. For I've just finished breakfast, coffee with fresh milk, the first I've seen that didn't come out of a condensed milk can in so long that I hardly knew what use to put it to, sweet butter (at the canteen, the boys rave over our canned butter from home but I can't see it), and finally a saucer full of huge strawberries. That doesn't

sound much like the terrible privations that we hear of in starving France, does it?

Yesterday I had an interesting experience. We get our supplies for the canteen from the commissary at an American aviation camp about twenty miles away. There is a camp of Engineers in this town and every day they send over for supplies and include our order with theirs. Yesterday another girl and I went over on the huge army truck, too. The streets of this town are cobbled and the country roads, though before the war they were kept smooth as a billiard table, now show signs of wear. It was pretty rough and we had to shout to be heard above the loud whirr of the motor, but the country was lovely and the slight rain laid the dust. Five miles from camp we got onto a wonderful road, built and kept up by the French. The camp used to be many fields of grain and pasture. Now it is a small American town of about 5000 boys in Khaki. It has a big R.C. canteen; one side sells coffee, chocolate and sandwiches to the boys and the other side is the officers' mess. Really it is charming, like the sun-parlor of a mountain camp, built of raw timber with bright chintz curtains at the windows, and continuing out from the mess is the officers' club with wicker chairs, card-tables, writing desks and a pervading sense of comfort and home. When I looked in I was amazed to see many boys in their shirt sleeves playing bridge and looking as though the war were unheard of except, of course, that they were all in O.D. uniforms. But the war is

pretty real to these youngsters, for they range in age from nineteen to twenty-five. Only the day before a R.C. nurse had persuaded one of them to take her up. Something happened and she was killed and he, though still alive, has concussion of the brain and is unconscious. One of the workers told me that in the course of seven days eight boys were killed. And they all talk of it as the probable event of the next few days, telling how they have arranged with their best friends what to do with their possessions, which to send home, which to keep, etc.

There are also two Y.M.C.A. canteens with class-rooms, reading and writing-rooms strewn with American papers and magazines, big entertainment halls where they have movies two or three times a week, with pianos and phonographs and all the American accessories that could make the boys feel at home in a strange land.

But the commissary was the marvel to me. It's like a huge country store out west, you know the one store for miles around, and consequently keeps every kind of stock. We went in a back door and stood behind the counter. The boys would come in and give a list of their requirements, razor-blades, witch-hazel, tooth-paste, cigarettes, candy, ketchup, jam, towels, etc. to the clerk (in O.D.) at the desk. He'd write them on a slip with the price in dollars and cents, add it up and translate the price into French money. The purchaser would sign his name and rank, pay, and hand the slip to the clerk at the counter. The salesman would run nimbly from one pile

of stock to another, apparently never making a mistake, and sliding over the counter the different purchases as he checked them off on the list. I watched him in amazement and in moments of lull he'd cart in a huge case of ketchup or pickles which had run out. I commented on the wonder of the organization and he smiled and said he was never built for a clerk in a country store. He enlisted in aviation but he may spend the war behind that counter. However, he certainly is doing his bit and it's a mighty tiresome bit, too, though unexposed to shell-fire.

Over here they marvel at the infantry, saying all the Germans they hit are punctured in the head or heart. And the French are proud to have them as an ally. And I guess they're not showing the Hun a thing or two! I've worked so long with the French that I like them immensely but in the week I've been with the Americans I've found out that if you really want true chivalry you get it in the American every time. And you don't have to ask him to help, he's jumped into the difficulty before you can ask, whereas a Frenchman waits to be asked and then has to be told how to help.



Bourges  
June 18, 1918

TODAY a train of English troops stayed about twenty minutes, so I had time to get three loads

of coffee and when I had served the men I looked for the officers. I came upon a little car with the platform along the side and saw "O. C." on the window. Two fine looking officers with various decorations were leaning lazily against the side and I asked if they wanted coffee. As they looked coldly down from their height and made no sound I thought I'd give them a whirl, and so with an air of utmost innocence I asked what "O. C." meant, knowing of course that it meant "Officer Commanding", and that very likely I was addressing some titled dignitary. They came out of their trance quickly and even stepped down from their height and took a drink.

Further along I saw a window with "T. S. M." on it. This was new to me. It is "Train Sergeant Major."

I was just plain irritated today by a long slim officer with a tooth-brush moustache and a cigarette in his mouth. I asked him if he'd have coffee and his cigarette merely jiggled. Again I asked him with the same result. A third time I asked him and the cigarette remained put, though he had a free hand. I felt like telling him that in our crude country a gentleman removed his cigarette when a female woman addressed him. But I didn't. He may never have another chance to speak to a woman.

While I was at supper another ring of the station bell. I dashed out onto the platform with two cans. As I was staggering along a boy ran up to me and took the cans and then stood



back to let me serve the others. No Englishman or Frenchman has ever done that for me. Ask them to help. Yes, they will help, if you show them how. But the American does it without being asked.

Last night I had a shock. I was at the *caisse* and saw two artillerymen in *horizon bleu* approaching. I asked the usual question: "*Vous desirez, Messieurs?*" and before I had finished one of them said, in pure American: "Got any gum?" They were members of the first Foreign Legion.



Bourges  
June 23, 1918

HERE at the canteen we make no difference between the officers and the enlisted men. They all form in line and get their food from the canteen and then bring back their dishes. The other day a lieutenant-colonel forgot his and was just slipping out the door when one of the workers reminded him. He had to about-face and bring them back. The men were pleased to death.

As I arose this morning before four o'clock to get to work at five, I'm going to bottle up a little sleep this afternoon. It was funny, too. When we got down to the canteen there were two boys sitting in a motor lorry looking as though they had lost their last friend. We told them to come

on in to breakfast and as they tried to warm themselves by the gas stove we put them to work opening cans, cutting bread and scrubbing tables. They soon warmed up and we let them come in behind the counter and eat with us a regular American breakfast of oatmeal and fried eggs and bacon. They were really humorous, not just horse-play. But no man's life is safe in that canteen if he seems unoccupied. He's immediately put to work as a K. P. Even captains are not spared.



Bourges  
June 26, 1918

I HAD a busy day, rising before the sun at 4:15 to be ready to open the canteen and start breakfast at 5. Marguerite Mitchell of Epernay was on with me. She's a brick, doesn't say much, but what she does say is humorous. And I've never heard her make a catty remark and you know that's rare enough among women.

It's a bit cold so early in the morning, but there's a spot on the way down to the canteen that's lovely at that hour. It's where the river Yèvre passes under the highway. The banks are lined with slender silver-green poplars. There's a field beyond, and at that hour there's a heavy mist on the field. After leaving the bridge, the scene changes to narrow, cobble-

paved streets with one-storied houses until I reach the dusky square before the railroad station with the four red-tiled baraquas, the dispensary, canteen and *dortoirs*, one for French, the other for Americans.

When I reached the canteen I found a note saying the night crew had served a thousand men and so there was not a drop left to drink.

There is always an early American train to serve. It sounds easy to make a lot of coffee in an hour—just let it boil eight minutes. But that's not the way here. The coffee is made in huge percolators—six pounds of coffee and the rest in proportion. It mustn't drip too fast or the coffee is too thin. As we had several early breakfasts scheduled for Americans we didn't open the doors to the French who pounded and howled outside, shouting that it was five o'clock and time to open. If we'd done it, they would have been in a rage that there was nothing to eat. From time to time I dashed to the kitchen door to sneak in a waiting American. At quarter past six when the percolators were finally ready and the coffee beginning to drip I gave up hope of serving the American train when someone announced that it was an hour late. I watched the drip, drew off the coffee, sweetened it, put in the milk and served it. I had hardly done this when the bell rang announcing the train and here was I without a drop of coffee. The train had made up forty minutes and was only twenty minutes late. However, the chocolate was ready, and

as nine-tenths of the French prefer it we were all right with them, and the few Americans who wanted coffee had to take chocolate.

Making chocolate is the most disagreeable part of my service. We use a powdered cocoa which has first to be mixed with water and this takes a lot of muscle. Then we add seven tins of milk. Frequently in opening the milk tins I cut off a chunk of my right thumb, for the blade of the opener is so short that it slips and my thumb comes in sudden contact with the sharp edge of the tin. That morning I made chocolate three times, twenty-one cans, and coffee four times. The milk is sweetened and it's hard to get it out of the tins. I used to try scraping it out with a spoon, but it would get all over my fingers, sticky stuff. Now I pour in hot water. That cleans out the cans, but it burns my fingers. Getting the chocolate from the mixing pan into the copper *marmite* onto the counter is always a dirty business, as it drips over the edges. The only consolation is that once the *marmites* and percolators are full the work is done, until a train comes in and cleans you out and you have to begin over again.

Besides the coffee and the chocolate the person at the *caisse* has to make sandwiches. This takes all her spare time. I've made so many sandwiches, all kinds, jam, cheese, deviled ham, that I feel as though I could never eat another.

The new shift took over the work at eleven o'clock and we went home to change for the first lunch at 12:30, for we wanted to have a long

afternoon. We wanted some kind of a party with dinner attached, for eating constantly at the cantine is something of a bore. Besides, you're not really in style there unless you have a chauffeur or truckdriver as a "steady" to eat with and to carry your dishes from the counter and back. I can't quite see it that way. Perhaps the right truck-driver hasn't come along yet, though I like all the boys and you can't know what a pleasure it is to be with Americans again.

Last night when supper was practically over, the ice cream and steaks all gone, a group of 32 men came in, a truck train having just arrived, all day on the road with 3-ton trucks. That means a lot. I wasn't on duty, was waiting for Miss Mitchell. I went to the counter and the sergeant who was heading the line stepped out and said he'd eat last and count his men as they came up. I told him he'd better stay where he was and get what was coming to him. No, he wanted to see that his men got fed. So we stood and chatted till a clatter of dishes followed by a roar of laughter announced that one man's dinner was on the floor. But I told him his meal ticket was still good, to get in line and get another dinner. His one thought was not for the dinner, however, but for the dishes he had broken. And the long line of hungry men waited patiently till he got another dinner. They're fine, these American soldiers, broad shoulders, narrow hips, and they seem like giants compared with the French soldiers who gathered about them.

Bourges  
July 1, 1918

HERE begins Sunday. I was clad and in my right mind reading a book for the first time in many weeks when at twenty minutes of one I heard the most amazing pounding on the door. It sounded like, "Open! In the King's name!"

I was just going down to the canteen so I unlocked the door which has a key like Roosevelt's Big Stick and there with bleeding knuckles stood Slade. I broke the news to him that it was a R. C. regulation that one worker couldn't go alone to dinner with an officer or soldier so we ate together at the canteen. He's in the Ordnance and wanted very much to visit the French munitions factory but didn't want to have to get a permit from higher-up, so I asked Miss Murkland who is the Y.W. worker who runs a Foyer for the women factory hands. She told us it would be next to impossible but that we could see the cantonments and the workers would be going out in an hour.

We came back to my garden. It's full of ramblers and other roses and shrubs but there aren't many trees nor any really shady place to sit. But the place adjoins that of Mlle de Bourbon. She is a crotchety person for though her house is a historic monument she won't let anyone visit it. Some Americans asked to go in and she turned them down. The two places are separated by a chicken-wire fence about two feet high and scaling it is simplified by a large stone



bench just the other side on her property. It's far from her front door and there's a ruined chapel which juts out from the house so that unless she peered round the corner she wouldn't be apt to see marauders.

We sat there for a while and then took the tram to the pyrotechnic and walked the ten minutes further to the Foyer and cantonments. We found the Sur-Intendente in her brown dress, cape, and veil with S. U. and a hand-grenade on her chest. It's a town of 4,000 people that she runs. They live in concrete houses, the unmarried women herded apart from the family houses. Each "house" in the baraque consists of two rooms, one kitchen and the other the general bedroom where as many as four people sleep, the men's beds curtained off from the others. These houses rent for ten francs a month and the women earn from 7 to 16 francs a day. Those earning 15 are in the more dangerous and unhealthy jobs as can be seen by their yellow hands and faces colored by picric acid. They ask for these jobs. The men earn more. No cooking is done in the houses, only in the canteen. The Sur-Intendente said the canteen was very expensive, dirty, and the food poor, that she had spoken again and again to the colonel and that he'd promised in one month—etc., but it had now been six months. The larger families have four-room houses for 40 fr. a month. The Sur-Intendente showed us the *lavoir* which she said she was ashamed of and which was to be torn down and rebuilt. I must say I should hate to

have even a handkerchief washed there because in the first place the pools are four feet deep so that the dirt rises to the top, scum, soap-suds, etc. The sides are about a foot high sloping down into the water, so to wash the women have to kneel and a child could easily fall in. Imagine anyone—it was the architect of the Génie—being idiot enough to build a public washhouse like that! The new plan calls for higher sides so the women can stand and wash without breaking their backs, running water and a depth of a foot and a half. That sounds like an improvement.

They have an infirmary apparently well planned, for a possible forty patients. They have 36 night-gowns and ten of the patients didn't get any as it was impossible to secure a laundress. But it was most interesting to visit. It is twenty minutes in the train from town. Most of the workers are refugees. In all there are 18,000 in this one usine and 16,000 in another so you can see the explanation for the growth of the town from 40,000 before the war to 150,000 now.

Coming back Slade kept at me to go to tea when he knew that I had barely time to change to my uniform and get on duty at five. But I wouldn't go and as I was hurrying to the canteen buttoning my cuffs as I went but on time nevertheless, a slight artilleryman with a misplaced eye-brow barred my way. I looked up into the pink sunburnt face and almost fell on his neck, for there was "Chicken." I hadn't seen him in over a year. I dragged him with me down to

the canteen and as Sunday is our busy day and there was a gang of Frenchmen clamoring for chocolate and I was at the *caisse* and had to serve them, he sat on a bench and looked on. The Americans began to throng in (83 of them came to dinner) and so I sneaked "Chicken" some bread and he went off to dinner returning just after we had served a train at 9:30.

I asked him in behind the counter as by that time the rush had begun to subside, but I didn't really get a chance to talk with him as I had constantly to jump up to serve coffee and chocolate. A colonel with his spread eagle—the prettiest insignia we have—wandered in with his captain and orderly and wanted dinner and we left him high and dry hanging over the counter imploring butter as just then the bell rang announcing a train. Hardy, and Rauss, the naturalized American from Dover, England, who looks so much like Floyd, and the M.P. corporal Burke who looks like a Bowery tough, helped us, boosting us between the cars of an intervening freight-train. When the train we serve is small (this was a cavalry train, all horse-cars with two men to a car) I walk along calling: "Coffee? Anybody have some American coffee? Regular O.D. issue, lots of milk, sweetened to your taste! Anybody have some?" And they come running just as when you rattle a pan in a barnyard and call "chick-chick". If it's a full train my call is not so enticing and usually has the refrain "no seconds" which makes them laugh. A soldier will say: "Someone's been in the army!" and

many of the cups drop out. But above all I am constantly impressed with their patience, no pushing, no jostling, no complaints when the coffee gives out.

Really it was the most informal proceeding behind the counter when we got back. There's a stock phrase in the canteen, that no American who wanders in and has nothing to do is safe, he's immediately put to work. Rauss was grinding coffee, Hardy emptying the percolators, Burke making himself a sandwich, another boy stirring the chocolate, I talking to "Chicken", and Dot, the French girl, putting away the dishes and telling the new night-woman what her duties were.

Just as closing-time, eleven o'clock, approached some more Frenchmen came in, so to save time I got Hardy to count the cash. I went over it, Dot O.K.'d it and we shut up shop. "Chicken" came along with me and Hardy saw Dot home. "Chicken" had written me many times that he had a lot to tell me and I know that he wrote me many things that he didn't reveal to the family and sometimes I talked to him like a Dutch Uncle when he wrote how bored he was with life and how the soldiers irritated him, how he went to the theatre for distraction, etc. One can understand how the ordinary uneducated soldier would irritate "Chicken" because, though a poilu, he is of the nobility and has a different standard and back-ground. I knew that he had something to say and I wanted to hear it and so I had to make a way. His train didn't leave until 3 A. M. and there was no place

for him to go to pass the intervening hours but to sit in the station and I couldn't sit there with him and talk freely. I couldn't parade the streets and I didn't want to sit on a park bench with my white coif and uniform to stamp me. So the only thing left was my garden. Of course at 11:30 at night the family were all in bed and the house locked, but I had the key to the front door so I slipped in noiselessly (I had my flash to light the way) and "Chicken" tip-toed in after me, and we unlocked the door to the garden and chose the one and only bench near the house.

To all outward appearances "Chicken" is sound in wind and limb and the casual observer would wonder why he wasn't at the front, but I know that his leg isn't solid, that is the muscles above the knee have shrunk so that the leg won't bend enough to permit of any strenuous exercise such as running. He has been found inapt for infantry, cavalry and artillery and as he is now in the treasurer's office in an artillery camp his only hope of getting to the front is to go as volunteer in the tanks. For this he has to do two months' training once his demand has been accepted. He asked me whether he should do that or go into aviation and I asked what his parents said. He told me that they weren't enthusiastic for aviation but had told him to choose, that he was old enough to decide. But so many would-be aviators get killed in training that I couldn't quite see that. Of course in the tanks one is usually either killed outright or untouched, but rarely wounded. However Chicken has the

feeling that he'll never come out of the tanks alive, which is a very poor way to go into them. He can't be sent as he's inapt but can't stand not getting back to the front. When he volunteered, he says, everybody (the farmers and peasants around the place) was surprised and shrugged, thinking he'd never get to the front but would have pull enough to stay in the rear. When he actually got to the front they thought he'd be there a few days and then draw a soft berth. When he stayed eleven months, they thought something had slipped in his pull. When he was wounded they couldn't understand it. But now it is over a year since he left St Valéry and he hasn't gone back to the front, and they are wondering how it happens and "Chicken" is almost ashamed to show his face. He has been accepted for the training in the tanks and will leave Saturday. His family is surprised as he is inapt and he hasn't told them he's going as a volunteer, thinks it would break up his mother. I told him that they ought to know, they'd be proud of him.

Two o'clock chimed out about that time and as the moon had long since risen and it was getting pretty chilly and his train left in about an hour, I sneaked him out of the garden through the house, locking the doors en route, and he left. Of course it was an awfully unconventional thing to do, but it's again a question of a good palship with a younger boy which always pleases me because it's devoid of all sentimental twaddle. Before he left I asked him why, while he was tak-



ing the course of instruction, he didn't at the same time take the training to become an officer and he said that that training would be very much simplified if he had first been to the front as a simple soldier. I've never seen anybody so crazy to get to the front.

I've never been in a place where all the workers fought so and said so many spiteful things behind the backs of those that they smile at and call friend! It's because they have no definite job with well-defined limits.



Bourges  
July 9, 1918

THURSDAY the Fourth of July was a busy day for us. The A. E. F. had a four days' holiday and the men thronged in from far and near.

The serious work of the day was a ball-game between the forestry section and the artillery. Of course, the French, oblivious of fouls, thronged about the home plate and first base and wondered why "Doc" Webster of the foresters wore a mask and pad and crouched behind the batter. The one M. P. gave up in despair and "rooted" with the best of us. Two casualties, a foul ball landing in the eye of an inactive *blessé* and another on the head of an unsuspecting child, failed to educate the French. When I came in to make a hurried transformation so as to get to work, my

aged florist told me he had seen this curious diversion of the Americans, that they certainly could throw the ball, but he couldn't see the point in running so fast and getting overheated, especially on so hot a day.

The M. P. sergeant is one of my best friends, and he says constantly that I'm the only friend he has in the canteen. There isn't any dirty work in the canteen that he or his men or the R. T. men wouldn't do for me, and it's just because I don't expect them to do our work and because I thank them and know them by name. I make it a great point to know their names, and "Good morning, Major Burke!" to the corporal or "How are the French lessons coming on?" to Dreizler, the sergeant's secretary who got an M. A. at the University of Pennsylvania, help a lot. He had taken French at college but couldn't speak easily and I knew that Suzanne, my florist's daughter, was dying to speak English with some of the boys. So I asked him to come and see my garden one evening, and when Suzanne and her small niece joined us I enticed the little maid away, for I knew that neither would attempt a foreign language in my presence.

While I was sitting on the lawn back of the house "Doc" Webster, the catcher, came in and while we were having a pleasant chat in walked the M. P. sergeant with a strange lieutenant. He had a good deal to say about himself and as the others were looking quite out of it and the lieutenant had told me he played the piano I

thought it would be easy to give the others a chance to shine, too, and suggested that he try the tin pan on which Suzanne plays. I didn't think the lieutenant could play too well but, sure enough, he tore rags out of the piano till I couldn't sit still and as I saw "Doc's" feet keeping time to the music we jumped up and danced. But this didn't suit the sergeant who went to the piano and asked the lieutenant for various songs and the evening was turned into a song fest. "Doc" says his singing is the jest of the forestry camp but I was near enough to hear his excellent bass voice.

Among the other soldiers I like is Pearce, the forestry major's chauffeur. He comes from Florida, has the Southern twang, though not nasal, keen blue-gray eyes, and everything he says is amusing. Here's an incident he told me of. The major decided that the windows of the barracks needed washing. He counted the number, divided it by the number of boys and pasted a notice requiring each boy to wash five windows by a certain time or else be confined to barracks for two weeks and not to let the window washing interfere with his other work. A stampede greeted this notice, each boy staking out his claim, and Pearce got five on the ground floor. To save trouble, he unhinged them, put them into a creek, and the creek did the rest while he was "resting", waiting for the major. Pearce actually did eight windows, and three other boys were counting on his three extras to make up their five. They certainly are an amusing group

of twelve, these foresters. Pearce's chief occupation is keeping ahead of the major. He tells me how far he's got and as he leaves usually says: "I've got to go home now and gain another week. The major's catching up with me."

Yesterday, Sunday, I was on the early shift so as to be able to go to the opera, "Mireille", given outdoors for the benefit of the French Red Cross. We served 121 breakfasts, sandwiches and coffee to 60 men and 175 lunches at 12:30. That, I think, is a record. Today being Monday will be dead. Many of the girls say and act: "Oh, I loathe Sunday!" That isn't the way to make these boys think they are welcome. What I dislike is having the French break into the long line of Americans and demand coffee or chocolate. I wrote you that at first I couldn't understand why some of the girls treated them like worms, but I can now, and I have to say to myself: "Buck up, be polite, they're human." It irritates me, nevertheless. However, they are falling off as we haven't any more chocolate to serve to them and that is what they came in such droves for.



Bourges  
July 22, 1918

THE way it happened that I had two escorts home was that Christmas came. I asked for

mail at lunch and was told there was none but there were two packages for me. One, a wooden box, I had one of the boys open and it turned out to be two 75 mil. shells beautifully hammered and sent by one of the Frenchmen who used to come to the canteen at Epernay. I think I wrote you about him, how his wife is in the insane asylum through over-work in the munitions factories, and how he used to sing at the Foyer in a charming high tenor voice. When he had to leave he said he'd write to me when he had the *cafard*. Recently he told me he was sending me "*un humble souvenir, ce que peut un poilu de France*". I thought it might be a *briquet* or possibly a 37 shell, but here are two beauty 75's. Madame is green with envy and when I showed them to the boys they murmured "*beaucoup francs*". (They don't pronounce it "beaucoup" but it's a word like "toot sweet" that figures constantly in their vocabularies.) I told them, no, that it was a souvenir from the front and they were immensely interested.

The other package, addressed in Dad's own fair fist, I discovered was ten pounds of Mary Elizabeth's candy. I didn't unwrap the paper as I didn't want to announce to the workers that I had ten pounds of candy as it would seem selfish if I kept it to myself and I'd much rather share it with the boys. So being satisfied as to the contents I left it wrapped and went to work making sandwiches. One hundred and six Americans suffering mostly from gas came in last night, stayed in hospital, and were to leave

today for an American base hospital, and we were to give them all a sandwich and cup of coffee. Cutting bread for 106 sandwiches is a lot of work but we managed it. The boys gave us souvenirs. One was a pin, probably the same kind of insignia as our major's oak-leaf, or a captain's bars. It's a beauty with "Eisernes Res. Inf. Reg. 219" inscribed on it. A lieutenant, so the boys said, had a fine pair of binoculars, another got a major's watch, and one boy had a silver cord with tassels tied to his poniard. One boy with a bandage tied over his eyes, was led up to the counter for coffee and as I tried to steer one of his hands to the bowl he warned me to be careful of the cigarette which he clutched. That's mustard gas at its best, but the lad who guided him said he'd recover. None of them seemed in a bad way. I looked at their tags and many were sprained ankles from falling into shell holes. One boy asked for two sandwiches to take to another lad with a broken ankle. But they were all a cheerful lot eager to get their next Hun.

When the train finally was announced I went out onto the platform to watch them embark and to dash back and get a parcel of shaving soap which one boy had left behind. Finally they were off and quiet reigned again.

Mr Steeman, the accountant, called me into the infirmary to get my June maintenance and just as I was leaving from the big room came a feeble cry: "Miss Hardon"! I looked in and there was the M.P. sergeant leaning feebly



against a bed, and wanting to pay me for the carton of Naturals which I had given him. I hadn't the right change so when I went back to the canteen I also got a tray of candy and took it in to him. His face lit up like a sun-burst. After supper I got another tray and took it into the boys' rest-room and offered them all some. So you see the candy came into good use immediately.

Finally closing time came. Acke, the M.P. who's a Belgian, speaks excellent French, and eats with his knife, in a humble little voice asked if I was going home. "Yes, why?"—"Because I haven't any smokes." These M.P.'s haven't been paid in a long time and they don't get their cigarette rations and have no way to get to the commissary. The canteen was closed, and our stock of smokes is low and to be saved strictly for the American wounded, but with 200 Melachrinos in my package, I couldn't be pig enough to tell that to Acke. I was sorry but could do nothing so I opened up one box and urged him to help himself liberally, Cotey and Wilson too, and the other boys who were there. I can now get smokes when I want to, as there is a truck going constantly to Melun and Issaudun. Anyway these M.P.'s help me so much and so willingly that the least I can do for them is to share the cigarettes particularly as I have a lot on hand for just such a purpose. In the canteen it amazes me whenever we have coffee to grind or are overrun with work to hear some of the girls say: "Why don't you get the M.P.'s to help you?"

That's the surest way to run a willing horse to death. I never dream of hunting them up to make them do our work, but if they come in I ask them to help and then slip them some smokes. Of course in their office they discuss us all back and forth and Dreizler told me one night that there was almost a fight because the M.P.'s maintained that "Miss Hardon is the best of the lot" whereas Domb (see other letter) wouldn't have it that way. But he was in a feeble minority.

When we finally reached home laden with my bundles, Cotey making light conversation all the way to the effect of how pleased my mother would be if I could send these shells right home and she could see them standing on the ends of the mantle-piece etc., we found Dreizler who had been up here teaching English to and being taught French by Suzanne. The others left and in the presence of the family I opened the package from Dad and found the wealth of Kolynos and wax thread, the Coronas for Knox, once he deigns to answer my letters and give me his address. Dreizler wanted some Kolynos and wanted to pay for a tube but I wouldn't hear of it. Of course I opened another tray of candy and left it with the family, so you see Christmas really came all around. I was so happy I felt as though I'd had at least one bottle of champagne all to myself.

I wanted to go home for September and told Mrs Vanderbilt so but she answered that I couldn't go on special leave from the R.C. be-

cause there now was a rule, aside from the "No-sisters-of-Men-in-Service" rule, to the effect that no one leaving France for America now could return until the war was over. Now, Dad, here's a job for you. Find out positively if I could come home for a month and *surely* get back to France. I don't want any niggers to rise up out of the wood-pile when I try to come back here. I get my next leave in September and I could just as well use it in going home for a month as in going to Paris, or Aix or anywhere else. And September at home! What could be pleasanter! Another thing you might find out is what the chances are of changing or rescinding the "No-Sisters" rule because Major Dickinson and Capt. Stuart of the R.C. say it's got to go as they are so in need of nurses and canteeners.

Now I'll tell you about "Mireille". I was on early shift at the canteen so as to be free in the afternoon. It was a record day, 121 breakfasts, 60 men for sandwiches and coffee, and a luncheon bread-line that extended way out onto the platform of the station and around the infirmary barrack. We served 171 before the shift changed at two and I dashed away to change my clothes. I met Pearce in the Royal Chariot and he turned around and with a sweep and a flourish landed me at my door. He hadn't a ticket for the show but I persuaded him to come and about 2:45 I heard strenuous efforts on my front door. In the street stood Pearce, Doc and one other youth and we set out on foot over the cobbles to the

garden of the Hôtel de Ville. The stage was surrounded by trees and bushes and made an ideal setting for "Mireille". What a change since the time I was reading it in 1913!! Doc had two reserved seats way up front and we found ourselves with the Forestry Officers, the Major beside us. The music was *charming*, fairly-like, like the serenade in the "Jewels of the Madonna" and the performers were from the Opéra Comique. I got almost every word and kept Doc *au courant* with what was taking place. Vincent was a beauty, in a gray suit, short breeches, white silk shirt and French blue beret and yards of the same color wound round his waist. Mireille was a blond, with the Arlesian cap and a pink or light blue fichu. All the parts were well taken and the voices excellent and this fascinating light aria music running through it. After the first act we managed to get Pearce into an unoccupied chair nearby and then by juggling the seats I succeeded in sitting between him and Doc and keeping them both up with the plot. It doesn't end as Mistral's version because after Oureias has hit Vincent with his pitchfork, Mireille's father forgives the unlucky suitor and the lovers are united. Doc enjoyed it all, he's musical enough to be happy in the music, but the officers and Pearce said that it was just like opera at home where you couldn't understand what they were saying.

When it was over, during the entr'acte we had sat under the trees and the boys consumed a beer

while I had lemonade, and Suzanne and Dreizler joined us, the boys and I went into the cathedral as Pearce had never seen it. I made them look at the wonderful windows, the old marble kneeling statues of the Duc de Berri and his wife, the old tapestries of Ananias struck dead before the prophets, and St Peter healing a lame man in front of the temple, and a charming modern marble statue of Joan of Arc.

When we got to the canteen I saw in the bread-line one of my former partners at Issaudun, a motor mechanic (all my friends are chauffeurs or truck-drivers, so why not a motor mechanic, too?), who at home was connected with Loew's Theatre circuit. He was the boy whom I had taken through Jacques Coeur's palace and to the cathedral when he came over after the dance some three weeks ago. So the four of us ate together and then came back to my garden to await the moment for the dance at the opening of the Foyer des Alliés in the town, and we had grabbed it for a dance. When we finally returned we found the officers holding the floor and so Pearce and Doc left, but the motor mechanic, Ralph Balton, the sergeant and I braved their displeasure and that boy certainly can dance. He's the most sensitive human being I ever saw, and it's because of that that we've really become acquainted. I was dancing with him at Issaudun and he suddenly changed from a waltz to a one-step with the result that I got out of step. As an excuse I remarked on his changing, then

someone cut in and danced me into another room. Sometime later Ralph cut back and began to apologize, thinking I was so annoyed at his changing step that I had left the room! I set that right at once, and we're now good friends, so much so that he wants to spend his seven days leave in Bourges; but I tell him he ought to go to Aix and get a real rest and change of scene, and I've made him promise never to come over here A. W. O. L. (absent without official leave) because should he get caught it would mean the jug, a fine and go down on his conduct sheet which is clear so far. If it weren't for that "No-Sisters" rule, there would be more American girls over here and then the boys wouldn't want to commit murder to talk or be with one, and it would relieve the rest of us from the strain of trying to be all things to all men and keeping these lonely boys in the straight and narrow path. And really, Mother, it makes me positively sick when I see what some of the representatives of the American Woman will do with these boys, lead them on until the boys are just crazy and then turn them loose to find a French girl. Of course the boys don't discriminate and one girl in an organization acting that way makes the boys think all the others will. Some of the American girls ought to be in the jug as well as the boys.

Now I must go to lunch. Thank you a thousand times for the parcel, it gave more pleasure than you can know.



Bourges  
August 9, 1918

Dear Knox:

SINCE I last wrote you I have received three letters from you, two containing letters from Dad and Mother, which were more than welcome. I also mailed you by registered post two boxes of cigars that came by mail from home. I hope you received them.

I have not gone to Is-sur-Tille, so I cannot help you in the way you wish. I don't regret not going as here I live really in the lap of luxury for the large sum of from four to five francs a day everything included. Also I have delicate attentions thrown in, such as flowers always in my room, a fresh rose daily to wear, sometimes two, the first delicious canteloupe from the garden presented to me, my laundry counted and put away, my stockings darned and ribbons run in my underwear. I remark that the lining of my coat has become so ripped that I couldn't find my way in and the next day to my surprise it slips on easily. Close inspection shows that it has been carefully sewed into place. Then a hole turns up in the soles of my shoes, and I miss them for a day and the next day they reappear soled and rubber heels attached. This attention I pay for, the others are gifts from above.

And one day I showed a handkerchief frayed at the edges. Soon after the Sainte Anne came along and you know that here one celebrates

one's Saint-day rather than one's own birthday. Mine, July 25th, came on a week day but was celebrated Sunday. First a charming handkerchief embroidered by Suzanne, the unmarried daughter, to take the place of my frayed one. Then an invitation to dinner. It just so happened that the day of the dinner three of the boys from the Forestry section took Suzanne and me to hear the jazz-band from Issaudun which was playing in the garden of the archbishop. One of my ex-partners from the dance at Issaudun came over with it and joined us. Then we took the boys through the cathedral and I almost wished the dinner was not to take place so that we all could go down the canal to dinner at a charming restaurant about a mile away. But I kept my wishes to myself and we all came back to the house and sat in the garden until Madame announced dinner. I asked the boys to come back later as I was to have a party.

And such a dinner. One of the M. P.'s, a boy who has an M.A. from Penn. and who comes up here for daily lessons with Suzanne (I brought him into the family), was the only other guest. A delicious vegetable soup, a tomato omelette, creamed veal with a sauce found only in France, delicious string beans; and here's a point! When I asked Madame why they were so much better than any I'd ever tasted she said she had put in "*un filet de vinaigre*", just a drop to give them a taste. Try it! Then salad, cheese, jam, caramel pudding and cake—cake baked specially for me! It was of the proverbial brown

flour but it's marvelous what can be done with it. The boys came back just as the beans were brought in but I soothed them with a box of Melachrinos (not one of Dad's big boxes; by the way, shall I send you one; it's still unopened?—but a small one secured in cartons from Melun) and the fascinating small child went out and played with them. Dinner over, I got two trays of the Mary Elizabeth's candy that Mother sent and we all strolled over into the adjoining yard of Mademoiselle de Bourbon and sat on her huge stone bench under the shade trees and ate the candy. Really I felt as though Christmas had come, and the boys just gurgled over the candy. Suzanne kept watch to see if Mademoiselle should come to disturb us but nothing happened until Madame called us in. She had told me that she wanted to "*offrir le thé*" to me and my friends sometime and the time had come. So we sat around the table while delicate white china cups appeared before us; and another wonderful cake. Tea at ten o'clock at night is not my idea, but you remember that at Blois Madame Roger used to offer us an alternative of tea or some syrup.

There was one girl short and so we set up a doll in the vacant chair, a doll named Phénomène, because she has two heads. Finally at eleven o'clock the party broke up. 10:30 is the hour at which the boys have to be in, but an M.P. sergeant brought me home from the canteen late one night and found one of the boys here after hours. There was a somewhat embar-

rassing moment and then the sergeant announced: "That's all right, Doc, you're not on the streets and you can stay here until the cows come home." The little Madame who is a wonder of charm, good-looks and alertness, asked if the cows were the M.P.'s. So you see we play a bit upon this permission.

Then this last Sunday we had a jolly party. Suzanne had asked me if I would take a bicycle trip with her to see some friends who live in a small town some fifteen kilometers away. The invitation was extended to any of my friends, so when the day arrived we had gathered five of the boys and started. I had worked hard at the canteen until two and then performed a rapid transformation. The wind was against us, and the grade was slightly uphill, and most of the boys had ridden in nothing more strenuous than an automobile since joining this man's army. I rather felt as though I were the mother taking her family out for a picnic and personally responsible if saddles were uncomfortable or the grade too steep. Finally two of the boys dropped so far behind that I was afraid they were either dead from fatigue or had given up and were riding home. I turned back and found them stretched under a tree, exhausted. However, we reached our destination and found the little Madame and a charming girl friend waiting for us. The family was away but the old grandmother remained and we had great trouble persuading her that, though we were warm from the ride, we shouldn't die from drinking water, and

that plain water was far and away superior to any mixture of syrup. Then we strolled down to the river, found a deep spot where a boat was moored, lots of surrounding bushes. The boys went one way, I another, and soon we emerged for a swim, the other ladies and two of the boys staying in the boat. The little Madame and her friend had to leave early to get the train back, but the rest of us stayed for dinner and then found to our intense delight that the wind had died and the grade was mostly down-hill. We continued the party here and when we finally broke up (I was on the early shift the next morning beginning work at 5 A. M.) we were all glad that Sunday came at least once a week.

I must get up to the bank now to make my daily deposit. Thank heaven, tomorrow I am no longer accountant!

Tell me if you want the cigarettes, Kolynos and wax thread.



Bourges  
August 20, 1918

I SHOWED your picture to the French family with whom I am living and who treat me as though I were the Queen of Sheba, and they said you looked so young without a mustache. That's one thing that the French can't get used to, our boys not having long clusters on their

upper lips, because as soon as it's possible a French boy grows one. I remember in hospital we had a man with a huge trailer and when he was operated he was awfully sick and the nurse cut off the ends. When he came to and found his beauty gone, he almost committed suicide. But thank heaven there are many French customs that our boys won't acquire and one is a moustache!

I'm not in Paris but in Bourges, a town due south of Paris, in the American Zone. It's on the main line from the coast to the front, and the railroad is owned by the Pennsylvania R. R. There are lots of troops passing all the time and doubtless in my last letter I told you that our heaviest work is feeding the troop trains with hot coffee. They always exclaim: "Gee! that looks like regular American coffee!" and then tell us that they "haven't talked with an American girl since they've been over." And I can't help thinking how nice they are. You know I've worked with the French for eighteen months and hadn't been with our boys at all until I came to this canteen, so I feel almost as though I were discovering a new nation whose language I speak, and I'm mighty proud that I'm one of their compatriots. I used to think the French soldiers were pretty nice, cheerful and grateful, but they can't compare with our boys. A Frenchman will see us struggling with a heavy can, or fighting with a percolator and think to himself: "What energy! These American women are marvelous!" But it's only one in a thousand who



will offer to help. You ask him to help and he has to put down seventeen knapsacks, and a coat and usually a bottle, and then you have to show him what to do, whereas nine times out of ten an American will step up unasked, leaving a hot breakfast to help you. Or when we're serving trains they will dash up and take the heavy cans and help us climb through the freight trains which are always in the way. Oh, I'm so pleased with our boys' courtesy and initiative that I can't say enough about them. It's largely in the way they're brought up. I remember when my brother and I were small riding in the horse-cars, and if an old man or woman came in, seeing which of us could jump up first and give our seat, whereas in France if the subway is crowded, the small child is pushed into a vacant seat and the mother may stand. Another horrid little trick of the French is smoking a cigarette until there's only about a quarter of an inch left and then sticking the stub onto the lower lip and talking with it bobbing up and down. There's one American here who talks with his cigarette in his mouth and I jump on him every time. But he's an exception and I'm getting him trained. Another thing that our boys do that pleases me immensely is that such a large proportion of them take their hats off on coming into the canteen. Doubtless it's unmilitary but it's a little courtesy that the French never dream of. And yet the French have the reputation for such politeness and we are supposedly so crude, but from what I've seen our boys have the true

courtesy. Maybe they wouldn't have it after four years of war but I like to think they would.

We've had two large trains of German prisoners through here recently and I wanted to talk to them but was afraid the guard might not understand and think I was a spy, so I asked the American lieutenant in charge. He said they'd been taken by the Franco-American troops at Villers-Cotterets recently, that they thought the Americans were fine because they gave them the same food that they had, and that when they saw white bread they thought it was cake! He said: "We let 'em go and they come right back just like a dog to his master." You know one can hate the Germans in the abstract with real murder in one's heart but when they come along as prisoners and are sick it seems inhuman not to give them coffee. It looks now as though we certainly had them on the run and I am so proud of our Americans. They are amusing, too. We had a crowd of boys from hospital pass through here. They came into the canteen and we gave them coffee and sandwiches and listened to their experiences. They were covered with souvenirs, officers' spy-glasses, and silver sword tassels, watches, rings, pin, belt-buckle, all kinds of things and they gave them to us with as free a hand as they took them, saying: "Oh! We're going back someday and we can get more." One of the girls got a pin, doubtless the regimental emblem, and as it was a beauty, she was wearing

it. The French soldiers noticed it and began to get so rough, saying she must be a Hun to be wearing the pin, that she had to take it off.

We've had two evenings of great dissipation. The first was July 3rd when in celebration of the Glorious Fourth, a nearby Aviation camp invited us to a dance. They sent a Packard truck for us and we travelled the forty odd kilometers bouncing over the road as fast as the truck could go. It was an officers' dance on one side of the canteen and an enlisted men's dance on the other. I stayed with the enlisted men as the officers had the nurses and others, and I've never had such a good time. It made me think of the dances out west, and certainly Sherry's best parties never boasted so many stags. We got back at five A. M., just in time for some of the girls to go on duty. Then last Saturday night the officers of one of the fields at this same camp were giving a farewell party to their major who was leaving for the front. This time two officers came for us in a Cadillac and we made the distance in twenty minutes. Up one steep curve we almost had an accident as the car was going sixty miles an hour and there was a sharp turn, but we came out of it with only a sound of cracking timbers and a jolt against the curb stone. The wheel wasn't even scratched! It was a select little party in a Y. M. C. A. hut hung with Japanese lanterns and snappy music by the Field band. During the intermissions we sat out in a small enclosure surrounded by scrubby pine trees planted by

German prisoners. And at supper! Chicken salad, sandwiches, ice-cream and *chocolate layer cake!* It's so long since I've seen anything that even resembled a layer-cake that I didn't know what to do with it. Made me think of the time in Portland when I had to get the waitress to show me how to eat steamed oysters! But this time I just watched the others and saw them put the brown sticky mass in their mouths and sigh with satisfaction, so I did the same.

The Cadillac brought us home at 3:30 and we had some hot coffee in the canteen and then I slept until five when I had to go on duty at the canteen. Strange, isn't it, what one will call pleasure! If the dance had come as an order from headquarters to go to the Aviation camp, walk ten miles around the floor to the music of the band, snatch an hour's sleep and then get to work again, we'd have said it was too much to ask of anybody, but because there was a chance that we couldn't go, and only four out of twelve of us did get there, why we four crow over the others who had really the less fatiguing work.

It has been so hot here the last week that if a drop of water touched us it sizzled. But fortunately my duty at the canteen was over at two and the sun hadn't as yet baked the canteen roof, and the evenings in the garden are glorious with a full moon. It's a heavenly spot, my garden, and every evening some of the boys come up and share it with us! Us is the two daughters of the florist, who owns it, and myself, and I've warned the M. P. sergeant with whom I stand in that

it's out of bounds for the police when they are on duty.

I must get to work now, the shift has changed and my hour is approaching.



Bourges  
Aug. 24, 1918

Dear Mother,

PEARCE is always amusing with his funny Florida drawl and his slang. Always a ready answer, never the least sting in it, and his first thought is for the other fellow. He's got more genuine sympathy and wise sympathy at that, than anyone I know over here, because you're at the top of the list for that quality. He's been a jolly good pal. I was feeling so low I just about decided to go home on a month's leave and it and the castor oil bucked me up so that I felt like a fighting cock. When Pearce came that evening, he said he wasn't feeling well and so I tried to jolly him along. I told him I was going home next month and he said then he'd come and take French lessons with Suzanne. Knowing he doesn't give a hurrah for Suzanne (he told her one night when I wasn't here that he was married and had three children) nor for Dot either who calls him "my chauffeur" (he's the forestry major's chauffeur) I began drawing vivid pictures of the parties that he and "Doc"

and the two ladies could go on, dinner down the canal, drinks in the Vélodrome park, strolls along the river road which I've never found, etc. I pictured his acquiring French by the handfulls so that then when the major sent him to a bookstore to get a map he wouldn't have to pick up two strange females (Suzanne and me) to go any more and the next thing I knew he was actually crying. I pulled his head down onto my shoulder and mopped his eyes because these boys all seem to be my younger brothers. Through his sobs I made out: "Your're the best little pal in the world and the only friend I've got over here." He went on to tell me he didn't care a bit for Suzanne or Dot or any of the others and his only pleasure was coming up here evenings. When he didn't come here he stayed at the *Parqueterie* and wrote letters. Of course, the boy is sick or he wouldn't have given way like that, but it somehow makes me feel as though I could be really doing my "bit" better here than by going home, and God knows I want to go. Then last night your letter came saying that sisters could now come back to France and you were so happy because then I might come home and I showed it to Pearce. He wanted me to promise that I would go, saying that you'd been looking for me and hoping for me every minute, every hour and he wanted me to go, etc. Pearce's mother died in 1909 and since then he hasn't had a home. His father of 76 went to live with his sister. Pearce sent his own sister through



college, and his brother he sees about once a year. He said: "Perhaps it's envy at your having a home to go to, and being able to go". Poor kid, he hasn't heard from his sister in five weeks, and I know she's writing every week.

Last night when the little Madame left to put the baby to bed and "Doc" and Pearce and I were sitting on the grass under a huge plane-tree, "Doc" said when I told him he'd spoil his eyes if he tried to read an extract from a letter in that dim light; "Gee, Pearce, isn't it great to have a real honest-to-God American girl to talk to?" "I'll say so!" from Pearce. "I'll say so," "You tell 'em, boy, and I'll mark time," "I'll tell the world", "You tell 'em, I don't speak the language", are all slang expressions of this man's army. Pearce heard recently that his best friend had been severely wounded and he decided on the spot to transfer into the tank service and avenge his friend. Of course this needs the major's consent. Then when the call for every available truck came, he tried to get the major to let him go, too, but that didn't work. However, an order may come for him to go tomorrow, next week, next month, and then perhaps he's fixed here for duration as the major is not of the constructing engineers, but the forestry, which is necessarily behind the front in the S.O.S. where General Pershing said recently that he was going to raise a division. I can't sail for home just yet as my time isn't up and perhaps

by the time it is the situation will settle itself just as it did when I was worrying and trying to make up my mind to go to Is-sur-Tille or to stay here. Anyway, keep the combinations and stockings a while yet; I don't need them just now as Madame has rejuvenated four of my old ones that I thought beyond repair.

The hard part of this service in winter is going to be the trains, rushing out from the warm kitchen onto the platform. But that's a long way off and by that time I may be far from here, who knows!

We went to a dance at Issaudun as I mentioned in my letter, but I didn't add that a few nights later there was a ring at the gate and the captain who was our escort asked for Miss Hardon. He and the lieutenant had slipped out of camp in a side-car which they left in a barn two miles down the road for fear the M. P.'s would get the number and report it. Pearce was here telling me his troubles and as a captain doesn't mix very well with a private, I told the captain that I was busy and to my surprise he returned the following evening, but this time with a legitimate though sad reason, investigating the cause of the death of an aviator who had been on a cross-country run and had been killed near here. He's a cavalry captain in the regular army transferred to the aviation. The family here amuse me. They say: "*Miss Hardon amène un soldat, un caporal, un sergent, sous-lieutenant, lieutenant et capitaine, sûrement un jour ce sera un général et alors on se tiendra au garde-à-vous.*"

Bourges  
 Sept. 8-11, 1918

SUZANNE was so annoyed when an aunt in Paris sent her a really charming boudoir cap *pour coiffer la Ste Catherine*. For when a girl reaches the age of 25 without having taken the matrimonial plunge she must *coiffer la Ste Catherine*, which comes the end of July. You know I told you last year that Théry was much interested to know if I would wear a bonnet when the day came. It was a new one to me. The picture I send doesn't do justice to the charms of the little Madame because she is really very piquant, always neat and well-dressed, and constantly busy making herself a hat or an apron for the small child. The building in the back-ground is the house next door, built on to the loft where Belleville sleeps, and has its garden behind the green-houses, consequently entirely shut off from this yard. They are standing on the bit of lawn with the huge plane-tree surrounded with glorious red salvia. Earlier in the season the red rambler rose and the purple clematis at its foot were in full bloom. In the evenings when we're eating out of doors near the bench "Doc," Dreizler, and Pearce come and camp on this lawn waiting for us to finish eating and it's been wonderful weather until just these last three days, but Monsieur Montigny calls this rain "*une bénédiction du ciel*" because the plants needed it so.

You see the house of Mademoiselle de Bourbon which adjoins the small house next door.

Extending out to the trees you just see on the left the ruined chapel, for the house was once a monastery of the Ambrosians. Also the trees on the left are the beginning of the long alley of lime trees which once were the entrance drive to a convent. It's along here that the benches are where we go and sit which I have dubbed the "*lieu sacré*".

It's just six o'clock and I have just waked after being on duty all night. I heard sounds of tears and looked out and saw Ginette, the small child who had upset her baby carriage and figured that it was easier to cry and have some one come and pick it up than to do so herself. So I called out and asked her what the trouble was. That supplied the necessary distraction and since then I hear at frequent intervals "*Coo-coo! Coo-coo!*" I look out and see her standing near a *massif* of begonias pointing her finger at me saying: "*Oh! la coquine! Oh! la coquine! Elle a envie de dormir, elle veut sommeiller! oh! la coquine!*" etc. Then she clucks, I go on writing and again the "*Coo-coo!*"

Suzanne and the little madame have just appeared in the wet and asked if I wasn't coming down. The whole family have said they will miss me when I go, they will lack distractions, even Monsieur, because I jolly him just a bit too. No, I don't mean "jolly", but I don't say things just as he expects them. For instance, one day I was going to work and in the shop window caught sight of my calcimined nose. I brushed it off and said to Suzanne: "*C'est encore heureux*

*qu'il ne pleut pas, sans ça ce serait une pâte."* Monsieur was standing there too and chuckled.

I began night duty last night. Just as I was about ready for lunch and going to work at one, Mrs Walker, the directrice, appeared and told me I was to go on duty at ten until 6 A. M. So I planned to sleep. I was showing Suzanne Canfield and Idiot's Delight, the first time I've had any cards in my hands in I don't know how long, when Madame announced "*un soldat qui demande Mademoiselle.*" I thought of Pearce or "Doc" or the corporal who comes from Boston and resembles Knox so much, as he was when I left home, that it's almost uncanny. He resembles him in everything, coloring, gestures, way of talking, choice of words, even the shape of his teeth, and I wondered why they should content themselves with asking instead of coming in, when Madame qualified her statement with "*un Français.*" I was even more amazed as here we have little to do with the French and I couldn't dream that one of them should even know my name. I went to the door and there was Ernest Blanc! I thought I was seeing things because in his last letter he had told me that he was in hospital for gas burns and that he didn't think he'd accept a convalescence because he wasn't strong enough to work and I know he hasn't the means not to work. I was just writing him a letter telling him that I wanted him to take his convalescence and rest and I'd give him the means to do it. That's just what I'm drawing maintenance from the Red Cross for. I've known for some

time that he was run down and needed a rest, but Ernest would rather go without anything than ask, and on his last convalescence he worked all the time, his mother was ill, and consequently he rejoined his regiment more tired than when he left. He's not a big boy nor very strong. I was awfully flattered that he had asked for a furlough for two places, Bourges and Marseilles, because of course it shortened his time at home as the moment he arrived in Bourges his furlough began and consequently he'd spend a day and half of it in the train going from here to Marseilles. But I was also a bit embarrassed because then I had to explain my plan to him face to face instead of on paper at a distance. Of course, I had trouble doing it but finally succeeded on the grounds that it wasn't personal from me, but from the American people to their big sister France and consequently to her sons. He was afraid of abusing my goodness and that I was making a sacrifice in doing it. As it's the middle of September and I haven't even touched my August maintenance, my "sacrifice" isn't tremendous!

Really, it turned out just like a Sunday at home. The family sitting around reading the newspapers, Suzanne, Roger, the cousin from Paris, a boy 14 who really is most entertaining. For instance, he was telling that he had written his parents, that he was eating melons here every day (and they're most delicious) and he said his parents would be so envious "*qu'ils vont sucer la*



*lettre!*" Well, Suzanne, Roger and I playing solitaire and then the men-folks dropping in, one for each of us, Ernest, Dreizler and "Doc." And then a reunion round the tea-table with tea, bread and chocolate for the *petit gouter* and I opened another of the few remaining pounds of Mary Elizabeth's that you sent. It was an awfully pleasant day and one of the few leisurely Sundays that I've spent in France. I showed Ernest all my photographs of St Valéry and others and finally when it had stopped raining sent him off to find a place to sleep in the French barracks for *permissionnaires*. Then came another of Madame's delicious meals, with potatoes, carrots and grapes from the garden, and I slept for an hour and a half. Just as I was about to start for the canteen I heard a now most familiar honk, as every time Pearce passes the house he blows his horn, and in he came to get "Doc" who had returned to spend the evening. However, "Doc" wasn't ready to go, he had told me he was supposedly at the cinema and so was returning late, so Pearce gave me a lift to the station. There are just two of us on at night, a new girl from North Dakota and I, and so I'm in charge. We had a busy night of it Sunday, which means crowds on week-end leave, and just now most of the Jews of the army have flocked in here on a Jewish holiday. I had been surprised to find so few of the "chosen" in our cosmopolitan army, but now I know they exist. When I came to duty I found a truck train of

sixty men had taken possession of the kitchen and were heating corn-beef hash and beans, another convoy of ten was to have dinner, and there wasn't even a sandwich for the remaining throng. The coffee and chocolate were low, having been dispensed to trains and I was kept busy replenishing the supply and frying eggs for train crews. For we always try to give some real food to train crews as they have such long hours and usually arrive just in time to miss the meal. And it pays to stand in with them, too, for last night, Monday, two of them came in and worked behind the counter for us all night long, cutting bread, making sandwiches, emptying and cleaning the coffee percolators, and when we had a big influx from the American Special, selling sandwiches and serving coffee and chocolate. Several times I tried to make them go to bed as they had been up all day but they assured me that "this is just play for us" and they were delighted to help us out in return for the good meal I'd once given them.

We get lots of little words of appreciation. Sunday night in the midst of the big throng the train crew gathered at my end of the counter as they were to get eggs. It was still fairly early and I still had an inconsequential joke to crack when one of the boys said: "Gee! I don't see how you girls have the time or patience even to smile." Then soon after one man, pitch black, in blue overalls and carrying Diogenes' lantern, brought back his empty egg plate and told me

it was the best meal he had had in France. Those two little remarks helped because I was somewhat irritated, the fire wouldn't burn, the eggs wouldn't fry, and there were so many men wanting eggs, men who had had a good dinner, and men who hadn't eaten all day, and it seemed so mean and thoughtless to me for the men who had eaten to try to begin again. While I hate to turn down a hungry man (I'm the first in the canteen to jump to fry an egg) I'm not a bit backward in turning down a man who is well fed and that's why the boys tell me that when I first came they thought me "hard-boiled." I haven't changed a bit but they've begun to realize now that I don't mean all that I say and that I'm willing and glad to do what I can for a man who really needs it. Also, I remember faces and know who has had a meal. They also know that anyone who does a favor for me gets paid in appreciation and its small favors, and the M. P.'s do more work in the kitchen on my shift than on any other. The sergeant came in Sunday night and washed dishes until three in the morning and he's never seen doing a stroke of work on any other shift. Finally, I forcibly ejected him and told him to go to bed.

I ought to get my leave now any day and I'm going to Paris to get my winter things and to Ste Nazaire to spend a few days with Knox.

Your letter about Carlton has come and was a great shock. It was the first news I had.

Bourges  
Sept. 25, 1918

I HAD an experience a few days ago that I am sure will interest you. I had on a Marine button and was serving at the counter when one of the boys pointed at the button and said: "Who's the Marine?"—"I had a cousin in the 8th Marines."—"8th, that's my regiment!"—"Then you can tell me where they were the 19th of July when my cousin was killed. You may have known him, Lieutenant Burr?"—"I'll say I did."—"Then tell me what you know," but the boy couldn't as he was rushing for a train but he promised to write.

I am enclosing a few photographs that may interest you. Pearce is the amusing boy from Florida who wept when he heard that I was going home. "Doc" Webster is another from the same company to whose mother I wrote because she was getting no letters from him. He's nearly a daily visitor at this house to have French lessons with the little Madame. He's a good kid, too, but he hasn't the sympathy that Pearce has and can't as successfully put himself in another person's place. I don't know when I've met any one who can do it as successfully as Pearce, and another of his good qualities, which "Doc" hasn't, is that he never says an unkind or fault-finding word about anyone, his fellow privates or superior officers. Once I heard him speak with indifference of some one and it surprised me as being the nearest thing to a complaint I'd

ever heard from him. He doesn't even speak unkindly of "Doc" who, I know, irritates him by calling him "my chauffeur". He's the pleasantest incident in my life here and when the Major goes off on two day trips and an evening goes by without bringing Pearce's amusing jokes and repartee, I miss it.

I am still waiting to hear from Paris as to when I get my leave which was due the 8th of September. I've got to get to Paris as my warm clothes are there and it's beginning to get chilly. Also, I need a vacation, I'm tired and I can't seem to get rested. The easiest shift for me is the morning because then I get home at 2:30 and sleep till six. Four hours in the afternoon and eight at night seems a necessity, so you see I must be a bit weary. But it takes all my time and I never get uptown even for a bath and a shampoo which I've long needed.

Just now I'm reading "Les Désenchantées" by Pierre Loti that Miss Bainbridge-Bell gave me last Christmas. It's most interesting. I read it sitting in the sun eating my *petit déjeuner* every morning.

I should worry about the submarines, if I decide to come home! But I must wait to hear from Paris and they don't deign to answer.



Paris  
October 3, 1918

YOU'D never guess where I am nor whom I'm with! I'm in Paris just for two days, came up

to get my fur-coat and some warm clothes and arrange with Mrs Vandebilt about my leave and about signing on again. Before I came up I'd had two letters from Mary Elizabeth saying she was eager to see me, so I telegraphed her asking her to reserve a room for me at her hotel, the Champs-Élysées. I thought I'd pay myself the comfort of a good hotel for three days and have the pleasure of being with her. When I arrived she was still out and there was no room in the hotel but she'd had a bed put in her room for me. So I was shown up here into her room with her neatly arranged bottles on the wash-stand and her purple-leather dressing cases on the dresser and her lovely evening dresses hanging in the bath-room and her German helmet and gas-masks that she picked up herself at Belleau Wood lying on the trunk-stand. I had a delightful time just being with her things until she came.

As she says, she has the best job in France. The R.C. has taken over the Régina Hotel, just opposite the Louvre on the square where stands the statue of Jeanne d'Arc, for its offices and has turned over the kitchens to Mary to make sweets for the American boys in hospitals in and around Paris. She is busy taking over bakeries and ice-cream plants to meet her demands and once she gets really going she expects to make daily deliveries to hospitals. Now she goes herself pretty nearly every day to different hospitals and is turning out about 300 liters of ice-cream and



600 doughnuts a day. Chocolate cakes, too. The day I came she went to a hospital and while she was gone left a receipt for lemon pie. The next morning I went down with her to the Régina and I wish you could have seen the pie! It was all baked together, crust, custard and white of egg, and had no crust, just a sort of grating on the top. But it was mighty good. Then in the afternoon I came back and we went together to a large tent hospital in what used to be the Long-champs Race Track. (I couldn't help thinking of the last time I'd seen it crowded with fashionable women the summer before the war when Miss Beckwith and I went one piping hot June day.) We took out two large freezers of ice-cream and a huge basket full of doughnuts. Of course there wasn't enough for everybody so we asked the nurse in charge which tents to go to and she chose the sickest. The boys were perfectly delighted and when the ice-cream gave out we distributed the doughnuts and constantly we'd see looks of amazement on the boys' faces and hear: "That's the first doughnut I've seen since I've been in France! Any seconds? Come again, ladies!"

Mrs Vanderbilt was away, so I am to see her this afternoon at two o'clock and then I shall know what to do, when I'm to have my leave and where I shall spend it, and whether I'm to go back to Bourges.

Today comes more good news in the paper. Damascus, Cambrai and St Quentin taken and

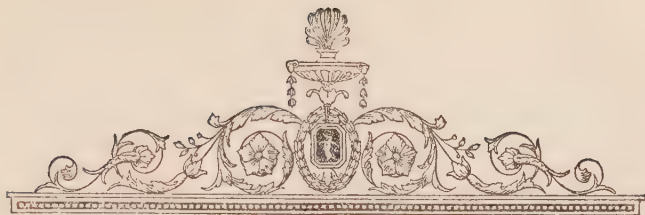
Germany threatening to bombard the Black Sea ports if Turkey follows Bulgaria's example and concludes an armistice.

It's ten o'clock and I must go to the rue Ste Anne to have the A.P.M. stamp my pass and also to the Quai d'Orsay to see if I can register my trunk and reserve a seat ahead of time as I'm planning to take the early train back tomorrow, if I can conclude my business today after seeing Mrs V. Mary has a dinner planned with three majors for tomorrow night but I feel I ought to leave in the morning if I can, as they're short-handed at Bourges.

Mary tells me such nice things about the Wilton house and she thinks you and Dad are "dears". I tell her she's dead right. But she didn't see the dogs! What has become of them?

AT THE FRONT





## *At the Front*

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Paris  
October 4, 1918

JUST a hurried line to let you know I'm leaving for the American front on an emergency call tomorrow morning to be gone two or three weeks. This is the form my leave has taken. As I brought from Bourges just the clothes I stand in and a tooth brush I've had to invest in two night gowns, one flannel to use as wrapper, aprons, collars, cuffs and veils, three towels, a bully camel's hair sweater that I needed anyway, and can always use, and a muffler. Today I shall get a rug, stockings, galoshes, hot water bottle, sewing-kit, get my pass and transportation from the R.C., go to dinner with Mary and three R.C. majors, pack and get some shoes out of my trunk here. All these purchases are coming out of the maintenance I drew yesterday for a month and a half back pay, 735 francs. I may draw £20 on my letter of credit as I don't know how long I shall be gone and may find myself sleeping under a hayrick. I'll cable you when I return to civilization. I'm going by train to Bar-le-Duc

and from there they send me by motor where they want me, heavens knows where it will be. *Don't worry.* Remember that the Germans are retreating and in such conditions Allied prisoners don't get taken and there isn't a chance for the Boches to about-face. Continue to write me c/o Morgan-Harjes and I'll write even if it's just a line, every chance I get. Mail will be slow and uninteresting as it will, of course, be censored.



Villers-Daucort  
October 7, 1918

As there wasn't much to do today I was put on a detail of one to nurse my cough and rest.

I'm in the nurses' barracks. At either end there are cubbyholes containing two beds and screening them from the world are two fluttering sheets. The middle of the barracks is less exclusive, no sheets, not even one on my bed, not a pillow case. I didn't take off my clothes the first two nights, for each time they said they were going to call me at midnight and each morning I was still in bed at 6:30.

What do we do?—The first thing in the morning we go into the receiving wards to see that the men have had breakfast. Those who are to be operated get only coffee and gum or a cigarette. Here is where gum comes into its own.



You hear a weary voice call: "Nurse!" and looking down the line of stretchers you see a man raise himself a bit and ask, "Got any gum?" and you dig into your packet and produce it. Again, you're tight-rope walking between the lines of stretchers and ask a man if he'll have a cigarette. No, it makes his mouth too dry and since he's been wounded he hasn't any taste for smoking, "but if you can give me some gum it makes the time pass quicker lying here." Then you slip a folded blanket under a head that's drooping off a stretcher and a feeble voice says: "All the angels aren't in heaven." You keep on giving drinks, moving feet, distributing gum and lighting cigarettes until the receiving ward is emptied.



Bourges  
October 23, 1918

I FOUND your letter in Paris on my return on sick-leave from the American front. I had gone up to Paris for two days to get my fur coat and warm clothes and they rushed me up to the front on an emergency call for fifty women. I didn't have the clothes but Mrs Vanderbilt issued me the aprons necessary and the others in the office made me all kinds of offers of underwear and so as I had two days to prepare I got the necessary things, a warm sweater, water-proof rug, etc.

and left. Arrived at Bar-le-Duc by train a large motor truck awaited us and we started along the dusty road, the sign posts reading "Verdun". Of course, I was almost jumping out of my skin with excitement, particularly as none of us knew where we were going. Everytime we'd climb to the top of a hill I was on tiptoe, craning my neck to see the shells bursting in the air, the waste of No Man's Land, possibly a white thread in the distance which would show the German trenches and off to one side Verdun rising like a sentinel. And of course every time I saw the same rolling, green, wooded country. Some of the girls said that the Germans held that sector in 1914, but the only sign of it was an occasional grave along the road-side, surrounded by a black fence, and marked with a plain black cross and the French tricolor in the form of a bull's-eye. One town we passed through once boasted a large café and in 1914 it was the seat of the Kronprinz' staff. Now it is only walls and the once proud and conspicuous sign over the door, and in the ruins the A.P.M. has built a tar-paper shack and regulates road traffic and passes.

At the first large evacuation hospital we dropped three of the workers. In sending us off Mrs Vanderbilt said she had chosen tried canteeners who wouldn't be in any way put out to make chocolate without any of the ingredients, because sometimes the supplies don't get around on time. Our particular task was to supply hot drinks in the receiving wards.

Finally after many adventures, such as the

curious sight of an American soldier with a red flag in his hand hustling out of the shanty at a railroad crossing when we came up to it, and stopping to give chocolate and cigarettes to a famous eastern division that was coming out of the trenches, having lost most of its officers,—the men were covered with dust and a many days' beard outlined their faces, the horses covered with mud hadn't a prance left in their stiffened legs and hardly cocked an ear at us, though the men still had their base-ball eyes when it came to catching sacks of Bull—having the overheated G.M.C. truck spout flames at us—and of course, as in the picture advertisements, it was a Ford that stopped and offered us a Pyrene, while I was hurling rolls into the field and tossing suit cases into outstretched hands,—and a major in his limousine piled five of us into the back seat to take us to the next hospital, we arrived. But I wasn't to stop there either. As there was a delay about getting the four other girls and the baggage abandoned by the truck, we five went into the receiving ward and helped give chocolate and relieve the men of their helmets, but only for a minute as we were bound elsewhere, this time to the evacuation hospital nearest the front. You can't imagine what a curious sight it is to pass through a peaceful French village, where the old women and small children are going about their business, shaking carpets out of the window, hanging up the wash, and next door in front of a sign "2 Officers, 50 Men" are grouped some twenty-five American niggers sitting in the

last rays of an October sun, singing plantation melodies, possibly a banjo or a mandolin in their hands, while the small boys in their black school aprons, the French soldiers' cap on their heads, look on in crowds. You pass a pond and there again see some coons watering their horses; through a stable door you see more coons bedding their horses and themselves, currying, shoeing, brushing their clothes, shining an officer's boots, nowhere a man not in uniform, unless it's a grandfather bowed over a cane! And ever the M.P. at the cross-roads with the red brassard, directing traffic, and the traffic is huge convoys of lorries, or a major's limousine that shoots by at 60 miles, all painted the army color, café-au-lait.

In the dim twilight we arrived at the large evacuation hospital nearest the front. Of course it is on a railroad and a hospital train was waiting for orders to load. The walking cases were wandering up and down trying to keep warm, some with blankets pinned onto their shoulders, the other ends trailing in the dirt. Everywhere they were blowing on their fingers, slapping their arms, like a New York cabby on a winter day. We waited with them until the necessary person was found to whom we were to be turned over. She then hustled us into the mess-hall. As you come in you pick a china soup plate off the pile and file up to the counter. You can have your soup, food and desert all at once or take it in courses, but anyway you do it, you have it on the same plate and it's merely a question of

choice whether you make three trips to the counter or one. There are some five soldiers to do the work, serve, clean up, wash the dishes, etc. and the second supper I had them, every one, and didn't know it—it happened so unintentionally. I found it out a few days later by overhearing a conversation between one of them and a nurse. "There's my mademoiselle over there!"—"Where, which one?"—"Up at the counter. (Having finished my soup I was getting the meat and vegetables). "She came in one night and I told her the drink was chocolate and she says 'Fine.' I tell you we almost fell over 'cause everyone else had kicked about its not bein' coffee." I hadn't known about the kicking but I was so tired when I came in to supper that I didn't care whether it was coffee or chocolate, though I had noticed, when the boy repeated "Fine" after me, that there was consternation and gratitude in his tones. And after that there wasn't anything I couldn't have in that mess-hall. If there wasn't any unsweetened milk, some would always appear from somewhere when I sat down. If the nurses wanted toast they made it themselves on the small stove, but I always had some without asking, the boys making it and offering it with an apology such as "the stove don't brown good today but I guess it's hot anyway." In the evening when I had been relieved and it was too early to go to bed and yet there was no place to go, as the R.C. canteen was so full of soldiers trying to get the day's paper that you couldn't even push the door in, and at any

hour of the day or night there was always some one sleeping in the barraque so I didn't want to go to my narrow straw mattress and make a light to write a letter, I'd go to the mess hall. The boys would be cleaning up but they'd take a moment to scrub off the end of the table or give me a lamp and then go on scrubbing the dishes and singing. When their work was over they'd sit around the stove and talk or spread a blanket on the table the other side of my lamp and play poker or high Pedro always with a "We don't make too much noise for you, do we, Nurse, so's you can't write your letter?" Half the time I was just pushing my pen along listening to them ragging each other. One lad was whistling a hymn. "Sounds like you got religion lately, Dave (ah, yes, he was named David, too!), what's the matter, makin' up for lost time?"—"No, the news makes me think we'll all be home soon (Turkey, Austria and Germany had just asked for peace.) Ah can jus' see mahself walk-in' down Main Street, Chattanooga, with a Fedora hat an' a cane. It ain't that ah'd look so good but ah'd feel so good. An' ah'd call her up: 'Hello Baby!'—'Hello Baby? who's hello Baby-in' me?'—'Aw g'w'an, daon't you know me, Dave?'—'Hello Dave, that you? Come on daown quick.'"

After supper that night I was hustled off to bed, with the idea that the other two would stay on shift till one and then I'd be called. But there was no unoccupied bed in the barrack, so I was lodged in the cubicle (real luxury, two



beds separated from the common herd by sheets) of the girl I was to relieve. Unfortunately her room-mate had been in bed for six days with an awful cold and in the morning I had part of it. The following day they innoculated her for diphtheria! and I had her cold. And there isn't any way to take care of yourself there, the beds are about two feet apart and it's cold as Greenland and it rained and I hadn't even rubbers. But there was so much work that I kept interested. When I got down to the receiving wards they were so littered with stretchers that it took a tight-rope walker to move among them without hitting arms, legs or heads, and from every corner of the rooms the minute a woman appeared, came cries of "Nurse, can I have a drink?" "Nurse, I'm going crazy if I can't have some aspirin for my head! I've asked three nurses and a doctor, can't you get me some?" "Nurse, have you got a light?" "Nurse, I'm cold." "Haven't you got a cigarette, Nurse?" Two wards with this going on all day and I alone to answer all calls. They were 200 operations behind, with nine teams of doctors operating night and day! Of course the men who came in were cold and our first task was to give them a hot drink. The operatives got only coffee, whereas those who were to be evacuated could have hot chocolate, sandwiches or anything there was. And when the ambulances are waiting in line to discharge their load and many of the men have to be fed through tubes it takes a long time.

The men would come in covered with dust and

a many days' beard which evidently embarrassed them. You couldn't tell officers from men, and it didn't make any difference. Many had their gas-masks which helped to make pillows, as a six foot man doesn't fit onto a five foot stretcher, and if his feet are hurt or his leg is broken, his head consequently hangs off the edge. A gas-mask and a folded blanket help to prop it. After they've been fed they are taken into the wash-room and put down at the other end of the ward. It's then difficult to recognize them. From there they go into the pre-operative ward, then into the operating room and then to a general ward. The following day one goes through all the wards with newspapers, cigarettes, gum, and writing-paper, and looking for familiar faces. One looks in vain, for whereas in the receiving ward one saw only bearded men covered with dust, one now sees white, hairless faces. From them all come smiles. Finally, a voice asks: "Nurse, wasn't it you who wrote a letter for me yesterday when I came in?" Doubtless, as I was the only person in there all day and I wrote a dozen or more, but is this man the farmer from Salt Lake City, the cowboy from Montana, who knew the ranch where I was, the taxi-driver from the St Andrews Hotel, New York, or the boy who was writhing in silent agony until I chatted with him and suggested I write home for him? He wanted his wife to know. The Salt Lake City man had four little brothers living with an aunt and was afraid his wound would maim him, but they

could sell his farm and get along for a while. He wanted me to say he was doing fine and would be up in a day or two which I did, and then told his aunt just what had happened to him but that the wound, though serious, was not dangerous. And which one was now speaking to me? I told him it was I who wrote, outlined what I said thinking that he'd give me a clue to his identity, as I wouldn't for anything have him think I couldn't pick him in the crowd anywhere, though I had to admit he looked so clean he certainly had changed.

One day when they were so far behind with the operations that they stopped admitting any more, I went to work in a ward. In the end bed was a German with a broken arm. I was passing cigarettes and gum (and it amazed me how often I'd be told "I don't use tobacco but a stick of gum would go fine") and wondered what to do when I came to him. Whether to treat him like a fly on the wall and not see him, or to slip him a cigarette as I did to the others! I couldn't mistake his identity as he had a piece of adhesive plaster on his forehead with "G.P." on it in indelible pencil. When I lit his cigarette he looked up like a grateful dog and asked if he might write a letter to his mother. You know, David, I'd have broken my neck to get him the paper necessary and told him to go ahead, but to write in Roman characters. Then I took off the adhesive plaster, and again the same look. But there were some Germans that came in, able-bodied, to whom I wouldn't have trusted a

cigarette for fear they'd fire the whole works. One top-sergeant, particularly, who looked capable of any of the crimes attributed to the Huns. I've seen some of them come in there and the drivers swarm about them hunting souvenirs, cutting off buttons, taking marks, belt-buckles, anything their fancy craved, without a by-your-leave, until the Boche had to hold his trousers up, as no more buttons were left. One day I told a driver that I wanted a belt-buckle and he fished one out of his pocket, saying he'd had it a week and didn't know what to do with it. I showed it in the pre-operative ward and one of the orderlies asked me to save the next one for him. It seems we both coveted an iron cross. The next night I was again in the pre-op. ward and with much mystery he beckoned to me and dug down into his wallet and drew out a beautiful iron cross of the first class with the black and white ribbon attached and showed it to me. It was a wonder, would make a glorious watch-fob, but he'd bought it from a driver for 125 francs and was so proud of it I hadn't the heart to even try to buy it from him.

This letter is getting into the proportions of Arnold's *Essays*, but I haven't yet told you half about my trip. The last day I was there I was feeling a bit groggy and so I strolled in the sunshine of a beautiful crisp fall day up onto the hill where the French cemetery is. The hospital used to be French and though they still have a few barracks it's mostly American. I noticed there were Americans up there digging a ditch

and after a while they lined up and I went over. There lay thirteen motionless forms pinned into blankets, the American flag spread over the top. The bugler read the funeral service, gave an impromptu prayer, scattered some dirt on them and blew taps. Then they removed the flag and the others shoveled in the dirt. There were then three long rows of freshly piled dirt with a small stick with the identity disk to mark the last resting-place of our boys. Not a flower, not a blade of grass! And across the way the French graves covered with bead wreaths! And the French are buried in coffins and can later be moved, whereas our boys will stay there forever! They may be black, they may be white, but they're heroes everyone! I picked some poppies and butter-and-eggs and laid them on the newly turned earth.

Some of them seem to endure more than is humanly possible. We had one large convoy from an eastern regiment. They had attacked, the Boche retreated as they advanced, and then surrounded and cut them off, leaving them isolated on a hill every inch of which was swept by machine-guns and high explosives. They were all wounded, one captain cut in two by machine-gun fire. Twelve times the French and Americans attacked. Finally, an American and two French regiments broke through and reached them after five days without food, five days lying wounded in the rain. And yet some of them came out so chipper that I had to see the great green gashes in their bodies to believe they were



wounded. Food was sent over by aeroplane but it dropped too far and the Boche didn't return it. One man said that when he looked at his wound that morning there were worms in it. In telling me of his experience he said they took one boy prisoner and cut his wrists and put poisoned rags on the cuts and sent him back to the captain telling him that they would all be treated the same way if they didn't surrender. "And what did the captain say?"—"Do you really want to know?"—"Yes."—"He said: 'To Hell with the Germans!'" But think how many of those boys that stayed forever on that hill could have come back if the relief had reached them sooner!

One bearded farmer from the south I never shall forget. There was a little blond New York Jew lying on a stretcher. First he wanted water, then it was a cigarette, then he grouched because no doctor attended to him, then he wondered why they brought him to a hospital where there weren't any medical supplies, why the nurses didn't pour some Dakin solution into the tubes that they'd put in his arm when they operated at the dressing-station! The bearded farmer lay on the next stretcher saying nothing, his face drawn with pain. Beyond him in the corner, a delicate-featured boy, very pale and large blue eyes, preferred gum because he couldn't use his arms to smoke as both had been hit. Finally, after I'd made countless trips for the Jew and he began to grouse at the doctors and the hospital—it was at the moment that they



were 200 operations behind—I said: “Look here. You’ve been operated and your wound is at least clean. The next man to you has had a broken leg for three days and the doctor hasn’t even looked at him nor has the dressing station. The man beyond him is hit in both arms and has only a first aid dressing and neither of them are saying a word.” He didn’t murmur after that and I dashed off to find the doctor, who had the farmer taken out of the evacuating row where he was lying and took him to the head of the line of operatives. When I delivered my speech, the blue-eyed boy smiled sarcastically, as much as to say: “He’s a New York Jew.” It wasn’t sarcastic but you could see generations of lavender and old lace, and southern sunshine, and slaves and great white-pillared porches in his background, and the pride which would make him smile on a crucifix. I wonder what became of him!

Incidentally, I didn’t have influenza; just a cold which has all gone and I’m spending my leave in Bourges where I worked in the canteen and where the French family treat me as a third daughter.



Bourges  
November 10, 1918

THE result of my cold was a month’s leave of absence here in Bourges which is now almost at an end.

Today, Sunday, is the first glorious day in weeks. It's a very damp place, Bourges, and even with the sun pouring into my room there's a heavy mist on the ground. And the streets! One can't find an adjective to fit them. They are covered with a black paste about two inches thick. It's funny, sitting at the window, to watch a truck go by splashing the pedestrians with mud. The wise and active ones take to cover like rabbits, the others wipe the mud off their clothes after the truck has passed and hurl invectives after the drivers, who grin with amusement. If the truck happens to hold a gang of blue-overalled negroes, you see dazzling rows of white teeth. The French are amazed at the American teeth, for most of the boys have beautiful white ones, with now and then a brilliant gold one.

The French are acquiring the habit of shaving in imitation of their new allies. In this family at first they couldn't get used to the clean-shaven faces. Dreizler, M. A. (Pennsylvania), ex-Latin and Greek professor, who comes to exchange French for English lessons with Suzanne, is twenty-eight and looks twenty-one. Pearce, the major's chauffeur, has many lines in his face and looks twenty-eight in consequence, though he is about to have his twenty-fourth birthday. And "Doc", who is a regular kid in many ways, is twenty-six. All of them have two white rows of teeth and no moustaches and this family thinks them the wonder of the age.

Bourges  
November 12, 1918

YESTERDAY was the day I've been awaiting for nearly two years. At the canteen, when I went to get a doctor from the post for my ear and teeth that have been hurting terribly at times for the last week, they told me that at the American camp a notice had been posted that the armistice had been signed and that hostilities would cease at noon, that a salvo from the anti-aircraft guns would announce the news to the populace. Sure enough at noon twenty-one guns, shouts and yells from the soldiers in the streets, and immediately flags were produced from nowhere. On every balcony, in every window, the French and American flags. The streets swarmed like a beehive, the church bells rang, singing, shouting, everywhere. A group of women went by led by a tall American laden like a Christmas tree and carrying a pole from which flew the French and American colors. They sang the "Marseillaise" and "Madelon" and every few yards the American ran about the group of women waving his pole and beating time and acting like an ancient jester. Soon crowds of French soldiers, all with flags, and singing, gathered. Every one on the street had flags and tri-color plumes on his or her hat.

Soon a motorcycle whizzed up to our door and I heard Suzanne in an argument and loud protests from Pearce: "*Non! Non! Non!*" He

and Rork, the other chauffeur, had driven up in their teddy-bear overalls and rubber boots to their hips and wouldn't come in for fear of soiling the floor. I went out to take part in the discussion and Pearce greeted me with: "How about that bottle of champagne you were going to crack for victory?"—"Well," I said, "how about it? I suppose you're going to have your corned willy at the *Parqueterie* (where they live) and we're going to have ours here. Why not combine forces and wash it down here with champagne?"—"Now you've said something! What hour?" Madame gave her consent for Suzanne to go and the boys left for their work. We settled on the Boule d'Or, a respectable hotel, or the Grand Café, a restaurant on the main street, reserved a table at both places and then stood and watched the crowds. The munitions factories had declared a holiday, so all the workers were parading, men and women, thousands of them. They all bore banners. Of course, the French and American soldiers were all there, the French mostly boys just called to the colors, or wounded men. In the throng I saw an M. P. darting here and there. I slipped up behind him and said: "You won't let things get rowdy, will, you, Atwood?" He turned on me with fire in his eye but it changed to a broad grin when he saw me. "Look at this crowd, and I'm all alone in this town. I've already had a fight with a Chinaman who was stealing all the clothes in sight."

Suzanne and I came home and I tried to sleep,

for I'd had little the night before. At seven the boys came and we went to the Grand Café. The place was packed. We heard "Tipperary", "There's a Long, Long Trail", "On Moonlight Bay", and "The Star Spangled Banner" coming from the restaurant. It was thronged with Americans, no standing room, but they had managed to save our table.

In the back of the room was a crowd of sixteen French persons singing and pounding on their table. Soon one of them climbed onto the table and sang the "Marseillaise." Across the way from our table was a group of five men and a girl. They had brought their own refreshments, Swiss cheese, lady fingers, marron mousse, and were gay and amusing. We smiled at their antics. We pored over the wine list and picked a Roederer, 1906, but when we came to order it found that the only kind left was Veuve Amiot. So we took that, and when later we asked for a second bottle it was all gone. The five Frenchmen nearly shed tears when they heard it, but we had reached the end of our meal and so closed with a Bénédictine and left.

Pearce was stopped on the street and asked for his pass and cautioned to be off the streets by eleven-thirty as the police force was to be doubled at that hour. As we strolled home the boys said: "We're grateful to you for giving us an excuse for not going out and getting drunk with the rest of the crowd." We played double Canfield till eleven and then the boys left so as to get in before eleven-thirty.

Now I'm going up to the post-dentist, for I have finally cornered a tooth that is sensitive to the touch and may be the cause of my sufferings, though he has told me that my trouble is rheumatic and that aspirin will cure it.



Bourges  
November 29, 1918

Dear Dad,

THIS is supposed to be "Dad's Christmas Letter," much advertised and long heralded in the "Stars and Stripes" and due to be written last Sunday. Mine is six days late but as it has nearly a month to get across in I hope it will make it.

For it brings good news, at least, I hope it will sound like good news, namely: the Red Cross has released me and I am coming home! I have a telegram from Mrs Vanderbilt saying: "Come to Paris at once," but as I couldn't get there in time to see her on Saturday and the R. C. office is closed on Sunday, I'm not going till Sunday. I've telegraphed Madame Mouquet to stow me somewhere as of course Paris is "packed" now. Last year when I got to Paris she even had people sleeping in the *salon* and *fumoir*, so I don't expect to draw anything better than the bath-tub, but I hope for that as it's now the rainy season.

I shall be glad in a way to leave this family,



for since I've told them I was leaving they all sit around and sniff and make sheep's eyes at me and they throw their arms around my neck and kiss me. I've never been kissed so much in my life and it's somewhat of a bore. Then, in moments when they find speech it is always to argue that if I had signed on for another three months I should have had a furlough at the end of that time and could pass it with them, or that they thought I was financially able to stay on longer in Bourges, doing nothing. The fact that I'm a useless mouth for France to feed and above all the idea that after two years I long to get home doesn't occur to them. They consider me a distraction and an occupation for Suzanne and they want to keep me on.

I'm wondering how I'm going to get to Bordeaux with all my possessions. The trunk I have here doubtless weighs over 30 kilos, all the luggage I'm allowed, and I have yet another trunk in Paris. That's one reason why I should prefer to go under the auspices of the Red Cross than as a civilian, because I imagine that they can fix it up for me. Also, travelling for them, I can get military rates. For instance, that way from Bourges to Paris, 1st class, costs me 8 fr. 35 for a six hour trip.

Yesterday was Thanksgiving. There was an American service at the Cathedral presided over by Monseigneur in his purple robes. The whole nave of the cathedral was reserved for the Americans, and Suzanne and I strolled in ahead of time as though we owned the place and asked

for the seats reserved for the R.C. and chose two aisle seats in the front row. There were many W.A.A.C.S., their officers, fine looking women, sitting beside us, and the whole nave was packed with American soldiers from the camp. It was impressive. The choir consisted of little boys in red, and some of them looked not over four years old. The French and American officers sat in the choir. An American first preached a short sermon about being sincere in every little act, and the Monseigneur with his retinue climbed up the steps of the altar. Of course we all turned our chairs around and faced the back of the church as the pulpit is half way down the nave.

It seems the 20th Engineers had a royal feast afterwards. Major Hinkley had said: "Never mind the cost," and there was turkey and apple and pumpkin pie. Pearce came to see us later. He's the only one who comes now, as Dreizler has scarlet fever and "Doc" has dropped us for some unknown reason. Madame had invited him to dinner and we also had turkey and I supplied the champagne, Veuve Cliquot. Doesn't that make your mouth water? And in the evening we went to the movies, Pearce and Suzanne and I. So we had a regular celebration. Pearce said he'd never before had so much to be thankful for. That's a compliment to me and also he expects to start for home in six weeks!

A delightful letter from you tonight dated Nov. 11. I shall send it on to Knox.

I've now completely recovered from my cold

and my tooth. The latter I still feel when I try to yawn with wide open mouth, but otherwise I'm fit as a fiddle.

Tell Mother I'm bringing home some seeds of cerfeuil and mâche, a kind of salad, and some delicious beans and some sprouts of roses that will need grafting. I've been so happy here and I dread the journey but I long to be at home with you all once again. And for heaven's sake, don't rope me in on any speechifying or entertaining of the farmers' wives. I'm coming home to enjoy quiet, not to get into the spot-light!



Bourges  
December 6, 1918

Dear Mother:

I'M in trouble again, and again it's teeth. This time it came on me the day before I was leaving for Paris, and so I changed my course and went to Châteauroux again. It was the same symptoms as the last time, but this time I wanted to catch it early instead of suffering two weeks, as I did before. I got to Châteauroux, after changing at Vierzon and having a compartment full of American soldiers make room for me, at 2:30. The R.T.O. told me the last train out was at 4:45 and the hospital was five kilometers out with no way of getting there except the Ambulance which left the chief hotel at 3:30. But

the R.T.O. would telephone out and maybe they'd send in for me on a special trip. Meanwhile, I paced the platform watching the clock. It got to be twenty minutes past and I started for the hotel. Many soldiers, total strangers to me, would pass me and bow and smile and then I'd hear in a stage-whisper: "That's the head-nurse." Outside a grocery store I found an American truck and the youth told me to wait five minutes and he'd take me out. He threw in the last chickens and cauliflowers and away he went, and he didn't lose any time about getting out to the hospital, either. There wasn't any wind-shield and I was sitting on a case of condensed milk, but though he took every bump on high, I stayed with him. Once arrived at the hospital I went right up to the "dental laboratory", and no Captain Wight. I had telephoned from Bourges that I was coming and when I'd arrive, so I was somewhat surprised. The orderly who recognized me, went to hunt him and I watched an aviator dare-devil do stunts out the window. He'd dive down into the court and when he seemed just about to collide with the building and we were holding our breath, because there was a Captain in one chair having a tooth drilled into but for the moment his nose and that of the operator were also plastered against the window, he'd start his motor and soar up into the sky and we'd heave a sigh of relief, too soon, for he'd start a spiral dive right into the court again. Finally he got tired playing and went off and the orderly came back saying

Captain Wight had checked out of the post. I was awfully annoyed because it meant I'd have to spend the night. I'd brought in my pocket a night-gown, comb, tooth-brush and Kolynos. I went down to the Adjutant's office and told him my troubles and he arranged for me to spend the night in one of the nurses' dormitories. I wasn't thrilled at the idea because I still had vivid recollections of the barracks at Villers-Daucourt. The C.O. came in then, an ineffective, paternal sort of man. The Adjutant said I was listed as having further treatment for the last tooth that came out from the dentist at the post here. I'd had trouble from him, Sauve had him pull a tooth and he broke it three times, and from all sides there were similar experiences with him, so I said: "I wouldn't go to him if I were dying. He doesn't know as much about dentistry as I do, for five years I sat in the dentist's chair three times a week. If I were a buck private you'd have me condemned for contempt of court for saying that but as I am in the R.C. you can't do anything." Smiles from the Adjutant, and a loud "Ha! Ha!" from a buck-private stenographer who found his typewriter most interesting just at that moment.

So I was sent off to the head-nurse, a huge woman, bust about 52. She took me to the R.C. hut to tea. A Y.W. girl was serving and the nurses came in droves. Captain Wight appeared for a moment and said he'd have an X-ray taken in the morning, meanwhile he was going out to pick up an aviator who had been doing dare-

devil stunts and had come to grief. There was nothing for me to do but wait. I had my tooth painted with iodine and the Y.W. girl took me to supper. Doughnuts! The second time I've had them in France! Then I went back to the R.C. hut, as a "loot" had promised to come and play. He was there when I arrived and for an hour he never took his hands off the keyboard. It was a steady stream of Sinding, Beethoven, Schumann—and I can't name any of the others, but they were all things that you play, and the tears splashed down onto the copy of *Life* that I was looking at, for in thought I was far away. Do you still play or have the Liberty Loan and the R. C. drive and the other activities, such as canning and farmerettes, prevented that? I hope not, for I'm starved for some music and I long for even a phonograph. I just want to hear you play and play when I get home, and it will be this month, too, unless I miss my guess!













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